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## Aftermath of conflicting abortion pill rulings

**Fatima Gamez Lopez**  
 SPANISH EDITOR

Rulings limiting access to the drug mifepristone, which is often used to end a pregnancy, has differences of opinion on campus and across the country for the future in reproductive health care.

Melanie Zavala, an integrated health science freshman, said she agrees with the ruling and believes abortion is wrong.

"That's why you have, like, safety precautions, like ... condoms for women and men," Zavala said. "I don't agree [with abortion] from my point of view. That's why there are ways of protection and ... babies should not suffer because dad and mom didn't take care of each other."

Sarah Christine Armenda, an English sophomore, said women should have the right to decide about their bodies.

"Hopefully, we get the right back to have an abortion instead of it being taken away from us for no reason just because people think it's best for women in their opinion," Armenda said.

On April 7, U.S. District Judge Matthew Kacsmaryk of the Northern District of Texas granted a preliminary injunction preventing the approval of mifepristone, citing that the "FDA acquiesced on its legitimate safety concerns" regarding the drug. Kacsmaryk gave the federal government seven days to appeal.

The same day, U.S. District Judge Thomas Owen Rice of the Eastern District of Washington issued a second injunction ordering the

See **RULINGS**, Page 12

# 'Vaqueros or rats'

## Town hall discusses growing frustrations about UTRGV art facilities



Studio art sophomore Eva Garcia questions Janna Arney, executive vice president and provost; Ed Pogue, School of Art and Design director; and Jeffrey Ward, dean of the College of Fine Arts, about the state of the conflicting course availability and scheduling that causes several students issues and what solutions they intend to make.

### Omar E. Zapata

A&E EDITOR

A town hall forum was held at Rusteberg Hall in Brownsville last Wednesday where UTRGV art

students and alumni voiced their questions, concerns and complaints to university officials amidst growing frustration over the quality of conditions.

With the room full of about

70 people, Executive Vice President and Provost Janna Arney, College of Fine Arts Dean James Ward and School of Art and Design Director Ed Pogue were in attendance.

"We needed an opportunity

to present [the issues] and that gives us the opportunity to respond and then open up the floor for comments and questions and a dialogue,"

Ward said at the beginning

See **ART**, Page 14

# Federal official visits campus, discusses energy justice



Ramiro Castro Jr./THE RIDER

Shalanda H. Baker, director of the Office of Economic Impact and Diversity in the U.S. Department of Energy, delivers a keynote address last Wednesday about Justice40, an initiative established with the goal of relocating 40% of the overall benefits of certain covered federal investments toward disadvantaged communities, in the University Ballroom on the Edinburg campus.

### Silvana Villarreal

THE RIDER

To address clean energy issues, 40% of benefits of certain covered federal investments will be relocated toward disadvantaged communities, including the Rio Grande Valley, a Department of Energy official says.

Last Wednesday, Shalanda H. Baker, director of the Office of Economic Impact and Diversity in the U.S. Department of Energy, visited the Edinburg campus to speak about the Justice40 Initiative.

Justice40 is a \$62-billion investment under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, which established the goal of relocating 40% of the overall benefits of certain covered federal investments toward disadvantaged communities.

Baker said that even though Texas

leads the country in energy, oil and gas production, and in wind-powered electricity and solar-power potential, it also leads in oil and gas bills and toxic discharges into water.

She said issues faced in the Rio Grande Valley, including higher incidence of cancer and asthma, are directly linked to a high concentration of energy and other industrial infrastructure.

"In the Rio Grande Valley, we know that all of the ... tremendous wealth that has been created by the energy industry has not made it to every household," Baker said. "We also know that the White House has identified this community as a disadvantaged community, as a frontline community."

The event, which had more than 100 attendees, was the first of its kind

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# ANNOUNCEMENTS



**Today  
Game Room Trivia**

The **Student Union** will host **trivia game rounds** every 15 minutes from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. in Student Union Room 1.10 on the Brownsville campus and at the same time in Student Union Room 2.100 on the Edinburg campus.

**Free Iced Coffee**

The **Baptist Student Ministry** will give out free coffee from 12:30 to 2 p.m. outside the Interdisciplinary Academic Building on the Brownsville campus.

**Adviser Series**

The **Center for Student Involvement** will host a “**Conflict Management**” information session for advisers, faculty and staff interested in advising a student organization. The session will take place from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. in University Center Conference Room 205 on the Edinburg campus and via Zoom.

**Carnival Funfair**

The **Campus Activities Board** will host a carnival with **free prizes, food, games** and photo opportunities from 2 to 5 p.m. on the University Library lawn on the Brownsville campus.

**Physical Therapy Presentation**

The **Exercise Science Club** will host UT Health San Antonio occupational

therapy student **Monica Garcia** to share her experience on applying, interviewing and other aspects of being a physical/occupational therapy student from 5 to 6:30 p.m. in Life and Health Science Building Room 2.314 on the Brownsville campus and via Zoom.

**Percussion Ensemble**

The **School of Music** will host a **student performance series** featuring the **UTRGV Percussion Ensemble** from 7 to 8 p.m. in the UTRGV Performing Arts Complex on the Edinburg campus and at the same time Tuesday in Music, Science and Learning Center Room 1.217 on the Brownsville campus.

**Tuesday**

**Adopt-A-Nonprofit**

The **Center for Student Involvement** will host **Adopt-A-Nonprofit** where students can learn about volunteer opportunities at Rio Grande Valley nonprofit organizations from noon to 1:30 p.m. in the Music, Science and Learning Center Courtyard on the Brownsville campus.

**Mass Celebration**

The **Catholic Student Association** celebrates **Mass** from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. every Tuesday in the University Chapel on the Edinburg campus.

**Inauguration Ceremony**

The **Student Government Association** will host the **inauguration ceremony** of the newly elected 2023-2024 school year executive officers and senators for the SGA from 3 to 4 p.m. in the Performing Arts Complex on the Edinburg campus.

**Wednesday**

**State of the RGV**

The **Civic Engagement Alliance** will host a discussion with experts to learn about economic, social and political climate regarding the Rio Grande Valley from 1 to 5 p.m. in Main Building Room 2.402 on the Brownsville campus.

**New Music Ensemble**

The **School of Music** will host a **student performance series** featuring the **UTRGV New Music Ensemble** from 7 to 8 p.m. in Music, Science and Learning Center Room 1.217 on the Brownsville campus and at the same time Thursday in the Performing Arts Complex on the Edinburg campus.

**Thursday**

**Impact Speaker Series**

The **Center for Student Involvement** will host its first **Impact Speaker Evelyn Cano**, co-founder and president of the Disability Chamber of Commerce Rio Grande Valley from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. in the University Center Bronc Room on the Edinburg campus. Lunch will be provided.

**Fashion Show**

The **House of Fashion** will host a **fashion show** focused around sustainability from 4 to 6 p.m. in the Albert L. Jeffers Theatre on the Edinburg campus.

**Friday**

**Stress Awareness Month**

The **Exercise Science Club** will host an event to **inform students** about stress management coping mechanisms from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Student Union on the Edinburg campus.

**Guitar Ensemble**

The **School of Music** will host a **student performance series** featuring the **UTRGV Guitar Ensemble** from 7 to 8 p.m. in the Performing Arts Complex on the Edinburg campus.

**‘Somewhere’ performance**

The Theatre Department will present the play “Somewhere: A Primer for the End of Days” at 7:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday, and 2 p.m. Sunday, in the Albert L. Jeffers Theatre on the Edinburg campus. Tickets are \$15 for general admission, \$10 for seniors and military personnel, and \$5 for the UTRGV community. For more information, visit V Link.

-- Compiled by Silvana Villarreal

# POLICE REPORTS

The following are among the incidents reported to University Police between April 3 and 11.



**April 3**

**10:08 a.m.:** A woman reported she was concerned for her nephew, a student, because she had attempted to contact him via telephone since March 3 but he had not answered. An officer called the telephone number on file for the student and left a message. The student called back and said he was fine and with his father.

**April 5**

**6:12 p.m.:** Officers and emergency medical services were dispatched to the Robert C. Vackar College of Business and Entrepreneurship building on the Edinburg campus in reference to a student who had a seizure and sustained a forehead laceration after he collapsed. Emergency medical services arrived, assessed the student and transported him to the hospital for further treatment.

**7:32 p.m.:** Two female students

reported being assaulted by another female student during an altercation over a class project on the Edinburg campus. One student was grabbed by the arm when she tried to walk away. When the other student tried to intervene, the student grabbed her arm and caused her pain. Both students declined to file charges.

**8:02 p.m.:** An officer responded to a vehicle facing the wrong way on the 1200 block of West Van Week Street in Edinburg. The officer determined the elderly female driver was disoriented and confused. Her son arrived at the scene and the woman was left in his care.

**April 6**

**6:36 p.m.:** A caller reported two men recording female students at the bus stop area of the Student Services Building on the Edinburg campus. Upon arrival, the officers saw two men matching the description walking away, but they ran when the officers approached. The surrounding areas were checked but the men were not

located. It was determined no criminal offense had occurred.

**April 9**

**3:25 a.m.:** Officers saw a man standing outside a vehicle covered in mud on the service drive of Lot E-33 on the Edinburg campus. Upon contact, officers found the man to be intoxicated in a public place and a danger to himself due to his state of intoxication. The man was arrested and booked into the Edinburg Municipal Jail. The vehicle was towed by an on-call wrecker service.

**3:47 a.m.:** The Brownsville Police Department searched for a man and woman involved in an aggravated assault with a deadly weapon that occurred on the Gateway International Bridge in Brownsville. The suspects were last seen around the Texas Southmost College Recreation Center. Because of its proximity to the UTRGV campus, a campuswide emergency notification was sent while the police department and UTRGV officers searched the campus and surrounding areas. The suspects were not located.

**April 10**

**11:15 a.m.:** Officers spoke with a man in Lot E-31 on the Edinburg campus. A criminal history check revealed the man had an extensive criminal history. He was issued a criminal trespass warning for all UTRGV property.

**8:45 p.m.:** A male employee reported seeing another male employee unclothed and showering in the sink in a restroom at Liberal Arts Building North on the Edinburg campus. The reporting party requested that the incident be documented.

**April 11**

**1:46 p.m.:** An officer contacted a female employee who reported being followed off campus on several occasions by an unknown person in a vehicle.

**5:05 p.m.:** An officer contacted a female student who reported being assaulted by a male student at an off-campus location in Hidalgo County. The student sustained minor injuries to her neck but declined to file criminal charges. The case is under investigation.  
--Compiled by Arisbeth Rodriguez



THE RIDER

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

**EDITOR-IN-CHIEF**

Verilu Infante

**ONLINE EDITOR**

Danielle Perez

**SOCIAL MEDIA EDITOR**

Abigail Ollave

**COPY EDITORS**

Arisbeth Rodriguez  
Natalie Lapsley  
Daynara Gutierrez

**EDITORIAL**

**CARTOONIST**  
Alejandro Peña

**A&E EDITOR**

Omar E. Zapata

**SPANISH EDITOR**

Fatima Gamez Lopez

**REPORTERS**

Brigitte Ortiz  
Andrea Flores  
Teresita Dominguez  
Silvana Villarreal  
Julien Juarez  
Aleena Acosta

**SPORTS REPORTER**

Jose Medina

**PHOTOGRAPHERS**

Daniela Martinez Salazar  
Ramiro Castro Jr.  
Aura Velasquez  
Isabel Morales  
Aurora Acevedo  
Landon Burns  
Blanca Castillo

**DISTRIBUTION ASSISTANTS**

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**FACULTY ADVISER**

Michell Escajeda

**STUDENT MEDIA DIRECTOR**

Azenett Cornejo

**STUDENT MEDIA PROGRAM ADVISER**

Jesus Sanchez

**ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANTS**

Ana Sanchez  
Maggie Castillo

**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 2.16  
Phone: (956) 882-5143  
Fax: (956) 882-5176

**Email:**

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# Annual State of the RGV Conference to be held on the Brownsville campus

**Teresita Dominguez**  
THE RIDER

To educate students about cultural differences, economics and political factors in the Rio Grande Valley, the Civic Engagement Alliance will host the annual State of the RGV Conference from 1 to 5 p.m. Wednesday.

“It’s more on the educational side of civic engagement, so we try to get different panelists or speakers that we think students might want to hear from,” said Melanie Gutierrez, secretary of education for the Civic Engagement Alliance.

The four panelists, Remi Garza, Cameron County elections administrator; Ronnie Garcia, associate director of employer relations for the UTRGV Career Center; Alex Stehn, co-founder of RGV *Puede*; and Veronica De La Garza, from the Office of Governmental and Community Relations; will speak during the event.

Each speaker will have 45 minutes during the event, which will take place in the Main Building Salón Cassia on the Brownsville campus.

“This year, we have a speaker from the Cameron County Elections Department, someone from [the] UTRGV Office of Community and Governmental Relations to talk about legislative updates in the Texas Legislature,” Gutierrez said. “We have a nonprofit called RGV *Puede* to talk about ... UTRGV [as] a B3 institution,



COURTESY PHOTO

Ronnie Garcia, associate director of Employer Relations at the UTRGV Career Center, will be a panelist for the annual State of the RGV Conference from 1 to 5 p.m. Wednesday in the Main Building Salón Cassia on the Brownsville campus.

as well as someone from the Career Center to talk more about employment opportunities.”

Garcia said attending the event is important for two reasons.

“One, it’s important to be aware



COURTESY PHOTO

Remi Garza, Cameron County Elections Administrator, will be a panelist for the annual State of the RGV Conference from 1 to 5 p.m. Wednesday in the Main Building Salón Cassia on the Brownsville campus.

of issues and opportunities that are happening in the Rio Grande Valley and to be able to participate and actively engage in areas of service that interest them,” Garcia said. “I also feel it’s an opportunity for students to learn

about how government entities work and figure out if, possibly, they want to work in a government entity to better service the community.”

Stehn, a philosophy professor at UTRGV, said he wants to raise awareness of the group and its objective to support schools that develop bilingualism, biculturalism and biliteracy in students from Pre-K through high school.

“I want anybody who’s a student in the audience to know that we exist and that if this is something they’re excited about, that they could contribute,” Stehn said. “They wouldn’t have to become an intern. ... We want the community to know that if you believe that bilingualism and biculturalism and biliteracy are good things, then RGV *Puede* exists.”

Cristina Rodriguez, assistant director of Student Activities, said the university hopes the event will inspire students to get involved.

“We would like the UTRGV community to be aware of what’s going on and how they can be involved,” Rodriguez said. “It takes one to make a change and by attending, we hope to bring awareness, educate and inspire opportunities to get involved.”

Admission is free for UTRGV students. There will be food and opportunities to win prizes.

For more information or accommodations, contact [cea@utrgv.edu](mailto:cea@utrgv.edu).

## New SGA executive team ready to bring change



PHOTO COURTESY STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

Odalys Saenz will serve as president for the 2023-2024 Student Government Association. The SGA held elections from April 3-5 for the executive officers and senators.

**Andrea Flores**  
THE RIDER

The newly elected Student Government Association executive team hopes to push B3 Institute resources and diversity as part of its vision after winning the general election with 930 votes.

Odalys A. Saenz will serve as president and Ihssan O. Al-Qudah and Juana E. Jimenez L. as internal and external vice presidents, respectively.

Executive Ticket 1, consisting of Josiah Gonzalez, Jose A. Rodriguez and Arianna Rosales, obtained 451 votes.

Saenz said she is glad 422 more students voted this year.

She said her team brings unique aspects of what it is to be a student leader as it comes from different SGA branches, making it stand out against the competitors.

“Working with faculty [for the College of Liberal Arts] really, really pushed me

to become the leader that I am today,” Saenz said. “I’ve been able to work with B3 [Institute], which is the bicultural, bilingual and biliterate resources ... and establishing a [Liberal Arts] Student Advisory Council. So, having these initiatives really pushed me to learn more about SGA, how to write legislative work, resolutions, bills, etc.”

She has been the senator for the College of Liberal Arts and chair of the Internal Affairs Committee for the 2022-2023 term. Jimenez has been the secretary of the senate and Al-Qudah has been associate justice.

Her next step is to meet with Al-Qudah, Jimenez and the newly elected senators to establish a system where all opinions are accepted.

“One of the initiatives we’re working on with Liberal Arts faculty is pushing for the UTRGV website to be translated in Spanish,” Saenz said.

She also talked about advocating for gender neutral restrooms in the new athletic facilities and improving the living quality and security of campus dorms.

Saenz said the team wants to work with the Learning Center to expand equal resources throughout the campuses, “especially with new numbers of incoming freshmen.”

She added she will carry out current SGA president Jonathan Dominguez’s incentivization initiative, which would be a new university tradition of a “President’s Ball” for students on the President’s List, if the senate approves it.

As of press time, Jimenez and Al-Qudah had not sent their statements about the election results.

The team will begin its term on May 1. The SGA will host an inauguration for the newly elected executive officers and

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**Sat, April 22, 2023**  
**7 AM - 3 PM**

Support  
**National Volunteer Week**  
by volunteering with  
Adopt-A-Beach at  
South Padre Island

In collaboration with:




Register at the  
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(956) 665-7566



Donald Trump  
@realDonaldTrump  
**WORLD WAR III**



## The meme that is our Congress



**Arisbeth Rodriguez**  
COPY EDITOR

When I was younger, I was told that I could rely on our government because the United States is a country that believes in freedom, justice and liberty. As I grew up, I realized that was bull.

Now, I don't get the right to choose whether I want an abortion if I need one, and neither can a child who is a victim of rape or incest. Along with that, I know the government doesn't care about

its residents, least of all the children they so desperately want to save from being "murdered" in the womb.

I know this by the lack of action taken against gun violence and the thousands of "thoughts and prayers" that never seem to work.

The only faint light at the end of the tunnel has been at least we have been allowed to

select our social media without interference.

As U.S. residents, we could choose what to waste our free time on.

With TikTok, anyone with a basic understanding of how to use a phone has been allowed access to the app where not only ridiculous trends start up, but where important news spreads quickly and efficiently.

Many people receive their daily news from TikTok. I have even heard about global news from the mouth of the anchorman fish from the show "Spongebob Squarepants."

It was on TikTok where I found out the app could soon be banned.

In this era, where artificial intelligence is becoming more common, where deepfakes are an issue and where VPNs are more accessible, how do you not update your knowledge so you can understand what you're governing?

Two bills were introduced, seemingly with the intent of banning TikTok on American devices.

One is the Restricting the Emergence of Security Threats that Risk Information and Communications Technology Act, proposed in March, which gives the Secretary of Commerce the power "to review and prohibit certain

transactions between persons in the United States and foreign adversaries, and for other purposes," according to the bill.

The second bill, introduced in February, is the Deterring America's Technological Adversaries Act, which allows "the President to regulate various commercial transactions and to block foreign-owned property and assets subject to U.S. jurisdiction." This basically means the president can ban or sanction TikTok or other foreign-owned properties if the administration determines U.S. user data is being shared with the Chinese government.

My issue with the bills is they seem to only target TikTok and not other social media that share American citizens' data for profit, such as Facebook and Instagram.

Another ax I have to grind is with the Congress, which argues for the bills to be approved but has no understanding of basic technology.

On March 23, TikTok CEO Shou Zi Chew had to testify about its consumer privacy and data security practices and its alleged relationship with the Chinese Communist Party to the House Energy and Commerce Committee after increasing

See **CONGRESS**, Page 13



**What do you think about the conditions of the art building in Brownsville?**



**Fernanda Villarreal**  
environmental science junior

"I've heard from my friends, personally, that the conditions are terrible. The restrooms, I've gone in there personally. I've gone with my friends and they don't have toilet paper. The mirrors are broken, the toilet seats are beyond, like, that's not an acceptable toilet seat. ... Nobody should be forced to go into those restrooms."

"I think it's very unprofessional the way it is. A lot of the ceilings have nails sticking out. The restroom's plumbing is bad and there's usually no toilet paper or toiletries. So, I would have to take that out of my pocket to have that, when I should be focusing on art supplies, not toilet paper."



**Yantel Márquez**  
studio art senior



**Andres Alviar Flores**  
computer science junior

"It's not in a very good condition that I can say. I've heard there's, like, rats biting into the walls. ... It's not a good condition for students, especially those who are pursuing those types of careers and want to spend their time [in] the art major building. For sure, it's something that they should focus more on."

*"La verdad, se encuentra un poco descuidado, y ... podría estar quizás en mejores condiciones."*



**Jose Gonzalez**  
estudiante de último año de ingeniería tecnológica

--Compiled and photos by Jesse Valencia, Silvana Villarreal and Daniela Martinez Salazar

### WACKY WEB POLL

WOULD YOU RATHER GO ON A CRUISE WITH YOUR BOSS OR NEVER GO ON VACATION AGAIN?



**90%**  
CRUISE



**10%**  
VACATION

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Texas Legislature

# Senate approves anti-drag bill

**Brigitte Ortiz**  
THE RIDER

The Texas Senate passed a bill prohibiting drag performers from dancing in the presence of children, stating a person who violates the legislation would be penalized no more than \$10,000.

On March 10, Sen. Bryan Hughes (R-Mineola) filed Senate Bill 12, which relates to “restricting certain sexually oriented performances on public property, on the premises of a commercial enterprise, or in the presence of a child; authorizing a civil penalty; creating a criminal offense,” according to the bill.

“Certain sexually oriented performances” will not be allowed in the presence of individuals younger than 18 years old, the bill states.

SB 12 passed by a vote of 20-11.

Local elected officials Sen. Morgan LaMantia (D-South Padre Island) and Sen. Juan “Chuy” Hinojosa (D-McAllen) voted against the bill.

The bill defines “sexually oriented performances” as a performer who is nude, male exhibiting as a female or vice versa and “who uses clothing, makeup, or other similar physical markers and who sings, lip syncs, dances, or otherwise performs before an audience; or any other



Daniela Martinez Salazar/THE RIDER GRAPHIC

performer who engages in sexual conduct; and appeals to the prurient interest in sex.”

During an April 4 Senate Session, Hughes said the bill does not intend to stop theatrical or other shows that do not appeal to the prurient interest. Municipalities are authorized to regulate those shows as they see fit.

The bill stirred up questions

by senators present in the session, including LaMantia.

LaMantia asked Hughes to clarify if the bill would not include movies, such as “Mrs. Doubtfire,” a 1993 film starring Robin Williams dressed as a woman.

Hughes replied, “the key element there ... is whether it appeals to a prudent interest in sex. Webster [Dictionary]

says that’s marked by arousing or appealing to sexual desire.”

Hinojosa also asked Hughes if a drag show appeals to the prurient interest in sex, would it mean it can be held at a commercial enterprise as long as children are not present.

Hughes replied that under the bill, drag shows cannot be on public property where children may be present.

Fish Navarro, who uses the pronouns they/them and is chair for the LGBTQ+ Task Force in Brownsville, said the bill is broad as there is no policy people have to follow to separate drag queens and transgender people.

“It’s definitely targeting a lot of trans people and trying to silence our community,” they said. “People who are perceived as trans might be confused as a drag queen, and people who identify as nonbinary, who might dress more [feminine] than usual, might also be perceived under this new bill. And it’s just kind of creating this atmosphere of us being scared to kind of be presenting in public.”

Relating to the topic, Sen. Roland Gutierrez (D-San Antonio) asked Hughes during the April 4 Senate Session how a police officer or district attorney would know the sexuality of the performer.

“Senator, as you know, between these elements there’s ‘or’ and then there’s an ‘and’ at the end,” Hughes replied. “If it appeals to the prurient interest and meets any of those above prongs, it’s captured by the bill because this is about protecting children.”

SB 12 reached the House Committee on April 6, but as of press time last Thursday, no action had been taken.

# Traveling memorial comes to ‘hometown of heroes’

**Aleena Acosta**  
THE RIDER

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund is collaborating with the City of Edinburg and UTRGV to host “The Wall that Heals” on its tour Thursday through Sunday at the Ebony Hills Golf Course.

“We are known as a hometown of heroes, the City of Edinburg ... one of the only cities with two Congressional Medal of Honor [recipients], Freddy Gonzalez and Pedro Cano,” said Edinburg Mayor Ramiro Garza Jr. “So, when this opportunity came up to host this wall that heals, I think it just goes with who we are as a city, and we’re just very proud of the opportunity to be able to host the wall here in our city.”

With the university’s help, the City of Edinburg applied along with more than 100 cities to host the wall, according to Letty Leija, director of library and cultural arts. The city is one of three in Texas to host the tour.

“It’s very important, especially this year because this year commemorates the 50th anniversary of the closing of the Vietnam War,” Leija said.

The wall is a three-quarter scale replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial located in Washington, D.C.

At 375 feet long, the exhibit is designed to bring 58,281 names of deceased veterans closer to their home communities throughout the United States.

“This is like a homecoming of heroes that the soldiers never received because when they

came home from the Vietnam War, it was a strange political scene ... and there was never a real ‘thank you’ or a ‘welcome,’” said Dahlia Guerra, assistant vice president for Public Art & Special Projects. “So, we feel like when the truck comes into town, we’re welcoming home the heroes.”

The exhibit includes 144 panels of names designed to increase in height as visitors walk alongside the wall.

There will also be a mobile education center, which has information about the Vietnam War and includes the “Wall of Faces” where visitors can input a veteran’s name and see a picture of them.

“It’s an opportunity for the community, especially the younger generation that maybe doesn’t have a lot of information about the Vietnam War, to be able to attend, learn a little bit more about the war ... what the soldiers faced,” Leija said. “There was over 3 million brave, brave men and women that went and fought in the Vietnam War. Some of them were drafted. Some of them went by choice.”

A veterans committee, which includes participants from UTRGV, the city, volunteers and veterans, will meet with the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund vehicle, that hauls the exhibit at 10:30 a.m. Tuesday outside the South Texas International Airport.

From there, members of the police force and other officials

Aura Velasquez/THE RIDER GRAPHIC

will escort the vehicle at 11:30 a.m. to Ebony Hills Golf Course.

“It’s just this big truck and it comes to town,” Guerra said. “... It’s accompanied by police cars, motorcycles and Vietnam veterans, and we’re going to have a helicopter flying all along the route. And then, the mobile unit parks at Ebony [Hills] Golf Course.”

Leija said at least 200 volunteers are needed for the event, with about 50 volunteers needed just for setting up and tearing down the panels before and after the event. The assembly process will start Wednesday and is expected to take about four or five hours.

Anyone who has a relative’s

name on the wall can find the panel that has their name and volunteer to carry that section.

“Aside from setting it up, there’s other duties: general public assistance, greet and direct visitors, traffic control, helping at the Education Center, looking up names for the visitors on the wall,” Guerra said. “... Depending on your ability, there’s three- to six-hour shifts, but it’s whatever one can do. Also, we invite the community to bring school tours or students to come and see it.”

The official opening ceremony will take place at 10 a.m. Thursday. There will be a colors ceremony every morning at 7:30 a.m. and taps ceremonies at sunset.

“I’ve actually invited all the

mayors of South Texas to join me in the welcoming ceremony of this wall,” Garza said. “... I wanted to invite them because there is an individual veteran that paid the ultimate sacrifice for just about almost every other community here in the [Rio Grande] Valley. I’m inviting the mayors so that they can be present in welcoming their resident soldier ... [and] join with me, because, as I mentioned, we’re hosting here in Edinburg but it’s really about the entire region.”

To volunteer or to see a schedule, visit cityofedinburg.com/wallthatheals. For more information on the exhibit, visit the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund website.



**Nombre:** Leonardo Novella

**Carrera:** Finanzas

**Clasificación:** Estudiante de tercer año

**Fecha de graduación:** Primavera 2024



Isabel Morales / FOTO RIDER

**Ciudad natal:** Valdarno, Italia

**Actividades extracurriculares:** “Con el equipo de golf hacemos mucho trabajo como voluntario”.

**¿Cuáles son las diferencias entre tu ciudad natal y los Estados Unidos?**

“Hay muchas diferencias. Bueno, mi ciudad natal es como un valle también. Que pues no es diferente pero es un valle porque tenemos muchas montañas. ... Diferencias, bueno la comida es diferente. A mi me encanta la comida mexicana, pero la comida italiana, bueno, es diferente. A mi me gusta muchísimo. ... Hay muchos platillos que aquí hago a veces: tiramisú, pasta en general, pizza en general también y muchas otras cosas que son más tradicionales. ... Cómo se vive también es diferente. En los Estados Unidos, hay muchas oportunidades para ser mejor en tu carrera y hay muchas más oportunidades para la gente joven. ... Italia es mucho más un país de viejos”.

**¿Qué hay en tu lista de deseos?**

“Ser profesional de golf. También estoy aquí porque en Italia no tenemos oportunidades de estudiar y jugar golf al mismo tiempo. Porque en Italia, la universidad es nada más para estudiar”.

**¿Quién es tu ejemplo a seguir?**

“Mi papá es mi ejemplo ... porque ha trabajado toda su vida pero siempre dando muchas oportunidades a la otra gente que ha estado trabajando por él o con él y, pues, un ejemplo de vida seguramente por su determinación. ... Ahora que tiene 64 años, sigue trabajando como si tuviera 40 y, pues, mucha determinación y ... tiene sus metas muy definidas”.

**¿Por qué elegiste la carrera en la que estás?**

“Mi papá es un ... *business adviser* y mi hermano también. Mi papá quería siempre que yo jugará golf [y] a mi hermano también le encanta el golf. ... En general, me gustaba ver cómo funciona el mercado internacional de países como Italia o aquí en Estados Unidos. ... Ellos un poquito me enseñaron cómo se hace y me gustaría a futuro hacer la misma cosa”.

**¿Qué consejo le darías a otros estudiantes internacionales?**

“Que no tengan miedo del cambio porque no va a ser fácil. Tengo muchos ejemplos de gente que se va su primer semestre y dicen, ‘Hay, no me gusta. Todo es diferente. La comida, diferente. La gente, diferente’. ... Te va a dar algo más que los demás porque vas a estudiar en otro idioma y tu mentalidad va a cambiar y seguramente te va a ayudar en un futuro”.

--Recopilado por Fatima Gamez Lopez

# Consecuencias de decisiones contradictorias sobre píldora abortiva

**Fatima Gamez Lopez**

EDITORA DE ESPAÑOL

Los fallos que limitan el acceso a la píldora abortiva mifepristona, que a menudo se usa para interrumpir un embarazo, tiene diferencias de opinión en el campus y en todo el país para el futuro para la atención de la salud reproductiva.

Melanie Zavala, estudiante de primer año de ciencias integradas de la salud, dijo que está de acuerdo con el fallo y cree que el aborto está mal.

“Es por eso que tienes precauciones de seguridad, como... condones para mujeres y hombres”, dijo. “No estoy de acuerdo [con el aborto] desde mi punto de vista. Por eso hay formas de protección y ... los bebés no deben sufrir porque papá y mamá no se cuidaron”.

Sarah Christine Armenda, estudiante de segundo año de inglés, dijo que las mujeres deberían tener derecho a decidir sobre sus cuerpos.

“Esperamos que nos devuelvan el derecho a abortar en lugar de que nos lo quiten sin razón solo porque la gente piensa que es lo mejor para las mujeres en su opinión”, dijo Armenda.

El 7 de abril, el juez federal Matthew Kacsmaryk del Distrito Norte de Texas otorgó una orden judicial preliminar que impedía la aprobación de la mifepristona, citando que la “FDA accedió a sus legítimas preocupaciones de seguridad” con respecto al medicamento. Kacsmaryk le dio al gobierno federal siete días para apelar.

El mismo día, el juez federal Thomas Owen Rice del Distrito Este de Washington emitió una segunda orden judicial en la que ordenaba al gobierno federal que mantuviera la droga disponible en 17 estados y el Distrito de Columbia.

La orden de Rice se aplica a Arizona, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Illinois, Michigan, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont, Hawaii, Maine, Maryland, Minnesota, Pennsylvania, Washington state and D.C.

“Un juez de un tribunal de distrito federal dictaminó que la Administración de Drogas y Alimentos aprobó erróneamente este medicamento abortivo en particular”, dijo Andrew Smith, profesor de ciencias políticas de UTRGV, durante una entrevista con The Rider el martes pasado. “Por lo tanto ... no se puede enviar por correo a las personas que lo desean ... porque no hay garantía de que no se usará con fines abortivos”.

La orden judicial de Kacsmaryk se produce después de que la Alianza para la Medicina Hipocrática presentó una demanda contra la FDA por la aprobación del medicamento mifepristona.

La Alianza de la Medicina Hipocrática solicitó a la corte que “revoque esa determinación científica de larga data basada en alegaciones especulativas de daño ofrecidas en apoyo de reclamos y argumentos que son inoportunos,



Isabel Morales / FOTO RIDER

El 7 de abril, el juez federal Matthew Kacsmaryk del Distrito Norte de Texas otorgó una orden judicial para evitar que la Administración de Alimentos y Medicamentos (FDA, por sus siglas en inglés) apruebe la píldora abortiva mifepristona. Kacsmaryk le dio al gobierno federal siete días para apelar.

inagotables y sin mérito”, según documentos judiciales.

Hace más de 20 años, la FDA autorizó el uso de mifepristona junto

interrumpir el embarazo no disminuye la tasa de aborto. De hecho, solo disminuye la seguridad de un aborto”.

Smith dijo que las restricciones en el aborto afectarán principalmente a las mujeres de clase media.

“Las personas ricas que quieren abortar siempre pueden ... viajar a un estado donde sea legal”, dijo. “Son libres de ir a México o Canadá u otro país y abortar. ... Las mujeres de clase media no tienen esa opción”.

Smith dijo que es probable que el caso llegue a la Suprema Corte de Estados Unidos. Agregó que Kacsmaryk insiste en que la FDA no siguió sus propias reglas y procedimientos.

“El juez afirma que la FDA no prestó atención a la evidencia de que el medicamento era de alguna manera peligroso a pesar de que

no hay evidencia estadística de ensayos médicos de que este medicamento es peligroso”, dijo.

Kirstin Munro, profesora asistente de ciencias políticas de UTRGV, dijo que alienta a la comunidad a informarse sobre el tema.

“Este es un momento para escuchar las perspectivas de los activistas de justicia reproductiva en el terreno, como South Texans for Reproductive Justice, que han estado luchando para garantizar el acceso a la atención de la salud reproductiva en el Valle [del Río Grande] durante muchos años”, dijo Munro.

En respuesta al fallo de Kacsmaryk, el presidente Joe Biden dijo en un comunicado del 7 de abril que su administración luchará contra el fallo.

“La demanda, y este fallo, es otro paso sin precedentes para quitarles las libertades básicas a las mujeres y poner en riesgo su salud”, declaró Biden. “Esto no solo afecta a las mujeres en Texas; si se mantiene, evitaría que las mujeres de todos los estados accedan a los medicamentos, independientemente de si el aborto es legal en un estado”.

“Esperamos que nos devuelvan el derecho a abortar en lugar de que nos lo quiten sin razón solo porque la gente piensa que es lo mejor para las mujeres en su opinión.”

-- Sarah Christine Armenda  
estudiante de segundo año de inglés

con el medicamento misoprostol para interrumpir embarazos hasta las 10 semanas de gestación.

La Dra. Denise De Los Santos, miembro del Congreso Estadounidense de Obstetras y Ginecólogos y profesora asistente de obstetricia y ginecología de UTRGV, le dijo a The Rider que la mifepristona es un medicamento que bloquea la hormona progesterona.

“Eso es necesario para que un embarazo continúe”, dijo De Los Santos. “Entonces, la mifepristona, cuando se usa junto con otro medicamento llamado misoprostol, se usa para interrumpir un embarazo hasta las 10 semanas de gestación”.

De Los Santos dijo que la píldora abortiva tiene más usos que la interrupción del embarazo. También se puede usar para tratar un aborto espontáneo y evitar que las mujeres necesiten cirugía.

“Creo que es importante darse cuenta de que ... tratar de detener la mifepristona también afecta a esos pacientes, lo cual no es justo”, dijo. “Y luego, la otra cosa es que simplemente prohibir algo que se usa para

# AYUDE A MEJORAR LA ATENCIÓN DE SALUD MENTAL PARA LOS NIÑOS DE TEXAS

**El Consorcio de Atención de Salud Mental Infantil de Texas está reclutando participantes de investigación de entre 8 y 20 años de edad que han experimentado eventos de vida dolorosos o estresantes.**

**Esto puede incluir: una enfermedad o lesión médica grave, la pérdida de un ser querido, presenciar o experimentar violencia, amenazas físicas o emocionales, un accidente automovilístico, desastre natural, ataque de animales, negligencia, agresión sexual, separación familiar, experiencias de terrorismo, estatus de refugiado o solicitante de asilo.**

**Los participantes elegibles serán compensados hasta \$400.**

Los padres / tutores de menores de 18 años deben dar su consentimiento para la participación de sus hijos.



**tcmhcc**

Texas Child Mental Health Care Consortium

**UTRGV**



**UT Health**  
Rio Grande Valley



**Para obtener más información cómo puede participar, llámenos o mandenós un correo electrónico:**

**CTR@UTRGV.edu**

**Catherine Hernandez (956) 296-1530**

# A hope-filled journey for the end of days

**Julien Juarez**  
THE RIDER

The UTRGV Theatre Department is currently in the final stages of preparation for the opening night of the play, "Somewhere: A Primer for the End of Days" written by Marisela Treviño Orta.

Performances start at 7 p.m. Friday and Saturday, with a final performance at 2 p.m. Sunday in the Albert L. Jeffers Theatre on the Edinburg campus.

Directed by UTRGV Associate Professor Jennifer Saxton, the play is about two siblings who travel the country tracking the last kaleidoscope of butterflies after all insects in the world died out. Along the way, the pair meet complex and interesting people who have their own share of problems at the end of the world.

Saxton was first introduced to the play when she decided to use it for a script analysis course she was teaching at the beginning of the pandemic.

"And then it [became] a student favorite," she said. "... They really loved it, and they responded really well to it."

She said the story is timely and important, and though it's grim, it remains hopeful.

"I was shocked how many people there were at auditions," Saxton said. "I was really happy. I had non majors and majors and dancers, and all kinds of people showed up."

Saxton said the cast and crew are coming up with nice collaborations.

"I love how excited they are to tell a story and how cool some of the ideas they're coming up with are," she said.

Saxton said she hopes people come see the play.



Aurora Acevedo/THE RIDER

Theatre senior Dominique De Los Reyes rehearses her role as "Cassandra" in the production, "Somewhere: A Primer for the End of Days." The play will be performed Friday through Sunday in the Albert L. Jeffers Theatre on the Edinburg campus.

"The story is fantastic," she said. They're doing a great job of telling it. I'm excited to see all the visual elements come together. ... If you're hungry for a musical ... there's some sung elements.

"It's also part of Earth Fest starting next week through the Office [for] Sustainability. [Chief Sustainability Officer Marianella Franklin] and her team have given us so much support. We really wanna thank them for the support they've given us in developing the project and advertising it."

There was an emphasis on ensuring resources used for the play were made

from recycled materials because it is part of Earth Fest. Once the production is over, she hopes to turn the set into compost.

Leo Benavides, a kinesiology junior, plays the role of "Paris" in the production and said it is the first in-depth play he has been a part of.

"Usually, most [other characters] are two dimensional, but 'Somewhere' has so many layers," Benavides said. "We've had hour talks with our directors and amongst each other about [our characters]."

He said the play has direct parallels and connections drawn to Greek mythology.

"Drawing those parallels and looking

into—I'm not a history person, but this play has really driven me to deep dive into Alexander the Great, the Trojan War, all that great stuff," Benavides said. "It's amazing."

Dominique De Los Reyes, a biomedical science and theatre senior who also plays the role of "Cassandra," shared similar sentiments.

"This is my first time being in a lead role in one of our main stage plays, so it's the first time I've taken up a responsibility like that," De Los Reyes said. "... It's just nice because I kinda relate to Cassandra a lot."

She said she would like more people to see that science and theater can work well together and believes the play embodies that notion.

"This is a play somewhat about science entomology," De Los Reyes said.

The depth of the characters and their interactions was developed through long discussions as far back as January.

"That tablework helped a lot in finding that depth to kinda help us portray that as well," De Los Reyes said.

She encourages the campus community to come watch the play.

"It really is something everyone can relate to," De Los Reyes said. "There's a lot of sibling relationships, different types, brother-sister, sister-sister, brother-brother. I think it's something everybody can learn from ... or at least it'll get them thinking."

Tickets are \$15 for general admission, \$10 for seniors and military personnel, and \$5 for the UTRGV community with ID.

For more information on ticket, showtimes and the production, visit [utrgv.edu/theatre/productions/box-office](http://utrgv.edu/theatre/productions/box-office).

## Astrology Rider: Weekly Horoscopes

**Danielle Perez**  
ONLINE EDITOR

**Aries**-Instead of seeking others who don't appreciate you, connect with those who do. Evaluate your friends who have been good to you based on their actions. This will help you determine the type of friendships that help you grow and which of them don't.

**Leo**-What you've been going through will have an effect on your future. Listen to your intuition and follow what it is telling you. Sometimes our intuition knows better than what we think. Rather than shying away from new opportunities, take them as they come.

**Sagittarius**-Avoid feeling guilty about what you need to do. Remind yourself that your choices impact your life. Make sure to be clear on your boundaries and don't let others dismiss them. Whatever happens next will take care of itself, so worry solely about yourself.

**Libra**-The next couple of months will change your life. Therefore, have an open mind when these developments start happening. Don't be afraid of what happens as everything will benefit you. Slowly, the life you've been anticipating is coming to fruition.

**Gemini**-Feeling appreciated by those around you is important to maintain a healthy relationship. If what you are feeling is the opposite, attempt to have a conversation about it. Then, if nothing is compromised or changed perhaps it is time to cut those connections loose.

**Aquarius**-If something does not feel right, make sure to speak up about it. Remember you are your own person and should be making your own choices. If you do not want to do something, don't do it. Listen to your intuition instead and stand up for yourself.

**Scorpio**-Your actions have consequences so be aware of everything you are doing. It is OK to be selfish and think about yourself, however, you also need to consider those around you. Remember that the way you treat others is the way people will treat you.

**Pisces**-Be excited for what is about to happen next because your life is about to make a full 360. Be proud of how far you've come and don't let it go unnoticed. Be optimistic and open to new positions. You never know what can happen next.

**Cancer**-Leave what has happened in the past and think about what you could do next. The only way to move on and make progress is to let go of what is holding you back. Take time to think about what you want the next months to look like and make it happen.

**Taurus**-There have been many questions on your mind lately about your future. If you believe that something is meant to be for you, go after it. If you are in between, sit down and reflect upon it by either talking to friends or family, making a vision board or journaling about it.

**Virgo**-You've made some amazing changes to your life that the universe is proud of. Don't let this go unnoticed. Share your growth with others so they can celebrate you. Although it can be hard due to other's opinions, at the end of the day, your true friends will be there for you.

**Capricorn**-Over the past few months, you've been overworking yourself with work or school. To help ease your mind from stress, take a breather in between by going on walks, watching a movie or planning a small hangout with friends. Recharging yourself will help produce better work.

## SUDOKU

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

Last week's puzzle answer key:

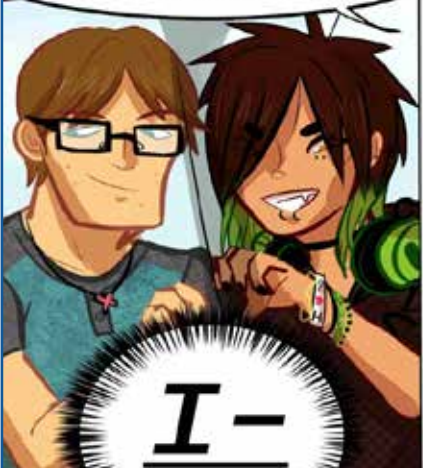
2	5	6	1	3	7	4	9	8
4	7	8	6	9	5	1	2	3
1	9	3	8	4	2	6	7	5
7	3	2	4	8	9	5	6	1
5	6	1	2	7	3	9	8	4
9	8	4	5	1	6	7	3	2
8	1	7	9	2	4	3	5	6
3	4	5	7	6	8	2	1	9
6	2	9	3	5	1	8	4	7

## DIBBLE DABBLES

by Alejandro Peña

The year we first met. Remember when you wore glasses all the time?

Remember when you wore 10 bracelets all the time?







**Marlene Gutierrez**



Jose Medina/THE RIDER

Graduate transfer student Marlene Gutierrez is a thrower for the UTRGV Women's Track & Field Team. Gutierrez graduated from the University of California, Davis, where she claimed gold medals in both the hammer and shot put at the Big West Outdoor Championships. At UTRGV, she is a program-record holder in Women's Hammer Throw, where her 61.8-meter throw secured her spot in university history.

**Q: How was the transition from California to Texas?**

**A:** "It's [kind of] funny. I went from one valley in California to the Valley here in Texas, which is fun. I would say that the weather has gotten me by surprise because of the humidity. But, overall, I like the overall feel of family. I [kind of] got that in California, and I get that here, which is awesome."

**Q: How do you like to spend most of your free time?**

**A:** "Well, I feel like a lot of it goes towards sports, so the most free time I have, I have to stick to, like, the books, and doing all my other stuff for my master's program. But other than that, when we do get the chance, the team and I have gone to the beach to go hang out. Just, [you know], having a good time out there and that's that."

**Q: Would you say you have a sense of community with your team?**

**A:** "Yes, definitely. I think that's what's helped with the transition, because everyone's so nice, and motivating each other. And because of the family feel, it's really cool to have friends like them."

**Q: What is your favorite animal and why?**

**A:** "OK, I'm gonna say a turtle, because they live really long and they are super calm, live a cool life, and I don't know, I feel like they represent a lot of wisdom. So, super cool. I love turtles!"

**Q: What are some of your favorite shows or movies?**

**A:** "Well, I just finished watching 'Grey's Anatomy.' That's just the most recent one that I have. Movies, 'Shrek.' 'Shrek' has gotta be it, all the way, all the 'Shrek' movies. I like ['Shrek Forever After.'] It's kinda funny. I mean, I feel like all the movies have not disappointed me. I loved it."

**Q: Do you like listening to music while training?**

**A:** "Yes, always. I always bring my phone out and I always have it on because it [kind of] helps me not think about throwing too much, so it's, like, a more chill day. It just depends on the day and the vibe."

**Q: Are you looking to go pro or do you want to have a career in your major?**

**A:** "I have been thinking about that a lot lately. I'm definitely growing where I wanna grow at, so I do wanna go pro eventually if I had the opportunity. I do have my career as ... a priority as well so it's [kind of] hard to put one over the other, but right now, all I can do is give my all in both while I can. And eventually, who's to say I can't be in my career, and also throw on the side? So, we'll see."

--Compiled by Julien Juarez

# New addition to women's soccer



Ramiro Castro Jr./THE RIDER

Women's soccer assistant coach Melanie Chandler poses last Tuesday at the UTRGV Soccer and Track & Field Complex on the Edinburg campus. Chandler was hired on April 3.

**Jose Medina**

SPORTS REPORTER

Melanie Chandler, who is already familiar with the Rio Grande Valley, hopes to change the student athletes' lives as the new assistant coach for the women's soccer team.

Chandler was previously head coach for Schreiner University's soccer program and the assistant coach at Waldorf University.

She started her undergrad at Waldorf University before transferring to Colorado Mesa University and earned her bachelor's degree in criminal justice. After that, Chandler returned to Waldorf to earn her master's degree in organizational leadership with a focus in sports management.

She said she came to the Rio Grande Valley to visit a friend years ago and fell in love with it, then while working as a head coach at Schreiner University, she would visit the Valley to recruit.

After a colleague mentioned Chandler's name to women's soccer head coach Mark Foster and associate head coach Audra Larson, she spoke with them over the phone and later met with them in person.

One difference Chandler said she is excited for is the high level of competition.

"It's a different division, different conferences," Chandler said. "Waldorf [participated in the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics] and then Schreiner was a Division 3, and so making the jump from NAIA to D3, and then to D1, it's exciting."

The new assistant coach said her philosophy for coaching soccer was to make a difference in the student athlete's lives, referencing messages she has

received from former athletes about the impact she had on them.

Chandler was hired on April 3 and has started meeting the players since.

"It's been really good just getting to know them," she said. "So, I'm super excited for that. And obviously, we'll

want me as part of the staff."

Foster said it was incredible to have someone who has head coaching experience in the staff.

"Someone who is going to be in line with [Larson] and myself's vision but also bring something different to the coaching staff, because coaches have to complement each other," he said.

The university could not have found a better candidate, Foster said, adding that Chandler has already started to show how she is a good addition to the staff.

Foster said he could tell Chandler cared for the student athletes and really wanted to make a difference in their lives.

"Sometimes we can get focused on winning and losing," he said. "Soccer X's and O's is when we forget that we're coaching people and we're coaching young ladies,

young ladies that have more in their life than just soccer, you know? They've got academics, life as well."

The goals for the soccer program are to get to a place where they are on the higher end of competition and Chandler believes the program can get to that point, Foster said.

Multidisciplinary senior and forward Jewelene Reuille said it was nice to have another coach on the staff.

"I think it's gonna be nice to have more hands on deck and then just another new perspective," Reuille said. "I also think her coming from a different division, it will help them see different insights of the game, and things that we can add to our game to, hopefully, do better than last season."

She said the dynamic with the team changed and that since Chandler was hired, the team has been on the "up and up."

**"It's an amazing time to be a part of UTRGV."**

--Melanie Chandler

Women's Soccer Assistant Coach

have a new group coming in too for this following year and, you know, kind of just building that program up."

Chandler is looking forward to seeing the season develop as preseason approaches in August.

She said it is always exciting to see new facilities being constructed and watching the growth.

"So for me, to join this staff and this program during a time like this in this university, where they're not just only building soccer facilities, but football, and everyone else was getting additions as well, like, it's an exciting time to be a part of UTRGV," Chandler said.

She said Foster is great and hopes to continue learning from him and Larson.

"They have a really good background," Chandler said. "And very reputable status in the sense of where they come from, and what they've done with other programs for them to be here and then

**THIS WEEK IN SPORTS**

**Baseball**

6:30 P.M. Friday vs. Abilene Christian University  
 6:30 P.M. Saturday vs. Abilene Christian University  
 Noon Sunday vs. Abilene Christian University

At the UTRGV Baseball Stadium

# CANVAS PAINTING STUDENT EMPLOYMENT



Luis Martinez, a computer science senior, paints a minion during National Student Employment Appreciation Week last Tuesday at the canvas stations on the Student Union East Patio on the Edinburg campus.

**Aura Velasquez**/THE RIDER



Gabriela Martinez, an education junior, paints a mountainous landscape at the canvas stations held in observance of National Student Employment Appreciation Week last Tuesday on the Student Union East Patio on the Edinburg campus.

**Aura Velasquez**/THE RIDER



Adriana Fuentes (left), a political science junior, and Angel Rodriguez, a history sophomore, paint landscapes and flowers at the canvas stations held in observance of National Student Employment Appreciation Week last Tuesday on the Student Union East Patio on the Edinburg campus.

**Aura Velasquez**/THE RIDER

# DURING NATIONAL APPRECIATION WEEK



Fatima Guzman (from left), student employment coordinator of the Office of Human Resources; David Morales, office of Human Resources student employee; Hillary Palomares, office of Human Resources student employee; Anjelica Hinojosa, house resource representative II; and Wendy Robles, recruiter; pose during the canvas station salary negotiation session in observance of National Student Employment Appreciation Week. The UTRGV Office of Human Resources hosted the canvas station last Tuesday on the Student Union East Patio on the Edinburg campus.

Isabel Morales/THE RIDER

Fatima Guzman (right), student employment coordinator of the Office of Human Resources, helps Samantha Lozano, a hospitality and tourism management senior, choose paints at the canvas station held in observance of National Student Employment Appreciation Week last Tuesday on the Student Union East Patio on the Edinburg campus.

Isabel Morales/THE RIDER



Anjelica Hinojosa (left), house resource representative II, and Wendy Robles, recruiter, open paints in preparation for the National Student Employment canvas station last Tuesday on the Student Union East Patio on the Edinburg campus.

Isabel Morales/THE RIDER



**RULINGS***Continued from Page 1*

federal government to keep the drug available in 17 states and the District of Columbia.

Rice's ruling applies to Arizona, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Illinois, Michigan, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont, Hawaii, Maine, Maryland, Minnesota, Pennsylvania, Washington state and D.C.

"A federal district court judge ruled that the Food and Drug Administration has wrongly approved this particular abortion drug," said Andrew Smith, a UTRGV political science lecturer, during an interview with The Rider last Tuesday. "Therefore ... it can not be mailed to people who want it ... because there is no guarantee that it won't be used for abortion purposes."

Kacsmark's injunction comes after the Alliance for Hippocratic Medicine filed a lawsuit against the FDA over its clearance of the medication mifepristone.

The Alliance for Hippocratic Medicine asked the court to "upend that longstanding scientific determination based on speculative allegations of harm offered in support of claims and arguments that are untimely, unexhausted, and without merit," according to court documents.

More than 20 years ago, the FDA authorized mifepristone for use in conjunction with the medication misoprostol to end pregnancies through 10 weeks gestation.

Dr. Denise De Los Santos, a fellow of The American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and a UTRGV assistant professor of obstetrics and gynecology, told The

Rider mifepristone is a drug that blocks the hormone progesterone.

"That's needed for a pregnancy to continue," De Los Santos said. "And so, mifepristone, when used together with another medicine called misoprostol, [is] used to end a pregnancy through 10 weeks gestation."

De Los Santos said the drug has more uses than termination of pregnancy. It can also be used to treat a miscarriage and keep women from needing surgery.

"I think it's important to realize that ... trying to stop mifepristone also affects those patients, which is not fair," she said. "And then, the other thing is that just banning something used for a termination of pregnancy doesn't decrease the abortion rate. In fact, it just decreases how safe an abortion is."

Smith said restrictions on abortion will mainly affect middle-class women.

"Rich people who want to get abortions can always ... travel to a state where it's legal," he said. "They are free to go to Mexico or Canada or another country and get an abortion. ... Middle-class women do not have that option."

Smith said the case is likely to go to the U.S. Supreme Court. He added that Kacsmark insists that the FDA failed to follow its own rules and procedures.

"The judge is claiming that the FDA did not pay attention to evidence that the drug was somehow dangerous despite the fact that there's no statistical evidence from medical trials that, in fact, this drug is dangerous," Smith said.

Attorney General Merrick B. Garland said in a statement last Thursday that the Justice Department disagrees with the Fifth Circuit Court's decision.

"We will be seeking emergency relief

**Isabel Morales**/THE RIDER

U.S. District Judge Thomas Owen Rice's ruling to keep the drug available in 17 states and the District of Columbia applies to Arizona, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Illinois, Michigan, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont, Hawaii, Maine, Maryland, Minnesota, Pennsylvania, Washington state and D.C.

from the Supreme Court to defend the FDA's scientific judgment and protect Americans' access to safe and effective reproductive care," Garland stated.

Garland said the Justice Department is committed to protecting Americans' access to legal reproductive care.

Kirstin Munro, a UTRGV political science assistant professor, said she encourages the community to inform themselves on the topic.

"This is a time to listen to the perspectives of on-the-ground reproductive justice activists, such as South Texans for Reproductive Justice, who have been fighting to

ensure access to reproductive health care in the [Rio Grande] Valley for many years," Munro said.

Responding to Kacsmark's ruling, President Joe Biden said in an April 7 statement that his administration will fight the ruling.

"The lawsuit, and this ruling, is another unprecedented step in taking away basic freedoms from women and putting their health at risk," Biden stated. "This does not just affect women in Texas—if it stands, it would prevent women in every state from accessing the medication, regardless of whether abortion is legal in a state."

**Ramiro Castro Jr.**/THE RIDER

Walter Diaz, dean of the College of Liberal Arts, speaks about the importance of bringing awareness to the energy justice issues in the Rio Grande Valley during last Wednesday's stakeholder engagement session. Diaz introduced Shalandia H. Baker, director of the U.S. Department of Energy's Office of Economic Impact and Diversity, who delivered a keynote address.

**ENERGY***Continued from Page 1*

hosted by the DOE's Road to Energy Justice initiative.

Justice40 covers climate change, clean energy and efficiency, clean transportation, affordable and sustainable housing, training and workforce development, remediation and reduction of legacy pollution, and critical clean water and waste infrastructure.

Its main priorities are:  
--decreasing energy burden and environmental exposure in disadvantaged communities  
--increasing access to and adoption of clean energy technology  
--increasing access to low-cost capital and clean energy enterprise creation  
--creating clean energy jobs, job pipeline and job trainings  
--increasing energy resiliency and democracy

Walter Diaz, College of Liberal Arts dean, attended the event and said it is important to bring energy equity and justice to the Valley.

"The benefits of current paradigms more promptly disproportionately accrue to more privileged social sectors while the costs are disproportionately

borne by the underserved and disadvantaged," he said. "This is wrong and must change."

George Atisa, an assistant professor in the Department of Public Affairs and Security Studies, asked Baker what role politics play in the granting of money toward environmentally friendly solutions, to which she responded it creates an accountability loop to know where funds and resources are going.

"When we show up as a Department of Energy senior leadership, we're actually connecting with local leaders and talking to them about their plans, talking to them about the opportunities that we also will be offering through the department," Baker said. "It's one way that we can at least begin to sort of tap into the political nature of the work that we're doing."

Atisa said during the event that the way issues are voted on will determine how resources are distributed.

"I think it goes beyond structure in politics," Atisa said. "A lot of it may be not structural, but these grants are structured in a way that you have to describe your outcomes. ... A lot of the time, [that does not] align with what's on the ground."

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**SGA**  
*Continued from Page 3*

senators at 3 p.m. Tuesday in the Performing Arts Complex on the Edinburg campus.

Gonzalez, a finance sophomore and presidential candidate, said one thing he would have done differently is work on increasing social media presence.

Rosales, a business management sophomore, said the team is happy with the results.

Rodriguez, a criminal justice sophomore and vice-president candidate, said he will try to join SGA again but this time as a senator at-large for Brownsville.

“We did what we could, but at the end of the day, it’s the students who decide ... what’s best for them and, obviously, they made their choice,” Rodriguez said.



PHOTO COURTESY STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

Ihsan Al-Qudah will serve as one of the vice presidents for the 2023-2024 Student Government Association. The SGA held elections from April 3-5 for the executive officers and senators.



PHOTO COURTESY STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

Juana Jimenez will serve as one of the vice presidents for the 2023-2024 Student Government Association. The SGA held elections from April 3-5 for the executive officers and senators.

**CONGRESS**  
*Continued from Page 4*

scrutiny over the app’s Chinese owner, ByteDance, according to House Energy and Commerce Committee.

I saw some of the hearing, titled “TikTok: How Congress Can Safeguard American Data Privacy and Protect Children from Online Harms,” on the Washington Post’s YouTube because I use TikTok and wanted to stay informed, but the whole trial seemed like a hilarious “Saturday Night Live” sketch with the stupidest questions and even more ridiculous moments.

Richard Hudson (R-North Carolina), the man who asked TikTok CEO Shou Zi Chew “if I have the TikTok app on my phone, and my phone is on my home Wi-Fi

network, does TikTok have access to that network?” is the representative for North Carolina’s ninth congressional district.

That’s embarrassing.

Isn’t it sad that at his age, 51, he knows less than an iPad kid about technology?

I’ve seen children understand that if their Wi-Fi or cellular data isn’t on, apps don’t work. But this man, paid by the government, can’t put two and two together.

These people don’t know anything about technology, but they hold all the power to dictate what we do with it.

In this era, where artificial intelligence is becoming more common, where deepfakes are an issue and where VPNs are more accessible, how do you not update your knowledge so you can

understand what you’re governing?

This congress is full of idiots who have no understanding of the technology they so badly want to regulate.

If they can’t figure out how Wi-Fi works, or why filters need to know where your eyes are to work or even how to remain bipartisan during a hearing, should we believe in their competence to dictate more pressing issues?

How are they able to govern at all when they’re clearly out of date and out of touch?

This country is a circus with clowns as ring leaders running the operation.

We, the citizens, are an audience held hostage with the hope that our leaders know how to take care of us.

As a hostage, I have never been more disappointed.

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Jesse Valencia/THE RIDER

Janna Arney (from left), executive vice president and provost; Ed Pogue, School of Art and Design director; and Jeffrey Ward, dean of the College of Fine Arts, meet with students, UTRGV art alumni and professors to address and listen to concerns and complaints about the conditions of the building last Wednesday in Rusteberg Hall on the Brownsville campus.

**ART**

*Continued from Page 1*

of the town hall. "... You're upset, and we know and agree. We're upset, too. And this is a dialogue to help us find solutions."

A group of students wearing T-shirts that read "Are we Vaqueros or rats?" started the meeting with a presentation.

The presentation featured information about the College of Fine Arts, the major concerns art students have with the Rusteberg Hall, safety, lack of materials, faculty, class availability, transportation between campuses and student testimonials.

Rusteberg Hall, which is currently leased by UTRGV from Texas Southmost College, is a major concern for the students.

Issues students brought up were: outdated furniture, not enough classroom space, water leaks, plumbing, pest infestations and problems with ventilation, especially when working with hazardous materials.

Arney said a short-term solution would be moving students to an adequate space until they achieve a long-term solution, such as

constructing a new building on the Brownsville campus.

"Our No. 1 ask in [the Texas Legislative Session] is a building on this campus," she said. "The [Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics] building, which will be an integrated building that will, hopefully, once and for all, allow us to move out into new space from our lease space. ... That's our No. 1 priority ... for our legislature and our No. 1 priority for the [University of Texas] System and those are our two funding sources for new space."

During the meeting, Arney said a short-term solution is space replacement, which has been an ongoing process. She added that two spaces have fallen through and they are currently looking for a third.

"We have not given up. We've continued to look," she said. "We were given a tip on a different solution earlier this year and that did not work, and now we're on the third [space replacement] just in this calendar year."

Arney said "nothing is on a timeline" as to when solutions will, or ever, be put into place.

She said every issue brought up to UTRGV is taken to TSC. The university

then advocates for what students want, the lease permitting.

UTRGV is not allowed to legally renovate the building to better handle the students' needs but what they can do is hold them accountable, Arney said.

Some short-term goals the presenters want for next semester are supplying students with art supplies, better furniture, safety equipment, improving the ventilation in the building and getting rid of the pest problem.

"We wanted to try to do an extermination for the pests, that also includes possums and mice, not just rats," said studio art senior Yantel Márquez during the meeting. "So, rodents in general. I know that one professor said that there is mice feces on his office desk and it's hard for him to work there and he has to clean it every single day. ... It's extremely saddening to see that the staff has to put up with all of these problems."

Arney said the short-term goal for the rodent infestation will have to follow the terms of the lease UTRGV has with TSC, but "we will continue to put pressure to make sure that it's taken care of adequately."

With frustrations growing during the

meeting, students spoke passionately about their comments, complaints and questions toward the university officials, some even asking about suing TSC over tenant rights due to issues with the building.

"I just want to be really clear, you don't need to convince me of what I see and what I've experienced," Arney said. "I'm not the enemy here. I am here to listen. I'm here to understand, and I'm here to advocate for you. And, so, it is easy to say, 'Just sue.' Nothing is quite that easy. And I'm not going to comment on that because it would be inappropriate."

Sean Hughes, a studio art sophomore who attended the forum, brought up concerns about the number of art faculty and class availability offered on the Brownsville campus.

"My question was to bring up if [the Edinburg and Brownsville campuses art programs are] equal, and that's what I was questioning as far as asking for the number of faculty and the amount of classes being offered here compared to Edinburg," Hughes said. "We're almost treated like a satellite campus and, so, I think the question was more about equity. Are we equal to that?"

He said he understands changes might not go into effect until next semester but hopes the town halls and students advocating for more will reflect in years to come for the future generation of art students.

"Majority of students in [the town hall] are going to be graduated by the time they decide to even build a building," Hughes said. "So, those long-term projects mean very little but, hopefully, when they become alumni though, they'll appreciate it and what they did by getting a little more momentum for the cause."

The College of Fine Arts will host its next town hall meeting from 1 to 2 p.m. April 26 in the Albert L. Jeffers Theatre in Liberal Arts Building South on the Edinburg campus.

"I just want to be happy to be [in Rusteberg Hall] ... because sometimes I feel like, sometimes, I avoid being here because of the state it's in," Márquez told The Rider after the meeting. "... I'm also kind of worried about what's going to happen in the future. It sounded like they kind of said the same things beforehand, like other town hall meetings. So, I hope this was, like, an eye-opener for future references because I'm not [going to] stop posting on social media."

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- Radio Online/Social Media Editor
- Radio Program Director
- Radio Reporter
- Radio Sports Reporter



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- Magazine Online/Social Media Editor
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All applicants must:

- Be enrolled at UTRGV for at least one semester credit hour in Summer Session I or II.
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- Have a semester grade-point average of 2.5 or higher.

### Student Media

- Advertising Manager
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**The deadline to apply for Pulse Magazine positions is 3 p.m. April 28. The deadline to apply for all other Student Media positions is 3 p.m. May 5.**

For more information, call 882-5143 or 665-5085.



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Torchlight flickered in the black, December night, and strange voices whispered back and forth.

"Sister," one said. "He is here somewhere."

"Brother," a voice returned. "You have said that eight times in the last eight minutes."

A young man with sandy, blond hair and russet-brown skin grimaced.

A young woman with ebony, black hair and pearly-white skin gasped.

"What? What? You almost made me pass out!" the boy exclaimed. He rubbed at his chest, and his torch cast golden rays under his chin.

"Don't," she advised. "He is here somewhere. Look."

"Wow!" the brother gasped. "King Lyndor! Is he supposed to be so still and cold and dead-looking?"

"He is wet with sweat and look; his shoulders move yet. He is alive."

"It was a figure of speech," the boy muttered at the ground, "to convey the message that this guy looks nothing like a king."

"Erendor," the sister said.

"What, Lynn?" asked Erendor.

"Give him a chance."

Erendor saluted. "I'll try!" he said. Then he leaped over a couple of knotted, tree roots and landed deftly at the side of the fallen prince. Erendor was about to poke the guy on the forehead to wake him up, but he realized that wouldn't be polite to royalty.

"Awaken, sleeper," Erendor said in his deepest, most booming voice.

The prince moaned; a spider hiding in his curly hair wagged its little black leg. She blinked her octet of beady eyes.

"No thanks," the prince slurred out.

"He talked!" Erendor said triumphantly. "Let's load him up on a stallion and mooove 'em out!"

At this, the partially-conscience prince squinted his puffy eyes open.

"He looks unwell. Let us take him to father," Lynn murmured at Erendor, placing a slender hand upon her brother's shoulder.

"I'm fine," the prince shrugged. He tried to sit up and succeeded in crumpling forward into a bed of leaves.

"What happened to him?" Erendor whispered. "D'ya think he'll be able to attend the feast we're preparing? What about the big volleyball tournament afterward?"

"Erendor this man is dying. Look at his eyes!" Lynn shouted.

Erendor raised his strong brows.

"His eyes are in the leaves infested with deadly fungus!" he yelled. He

grabbed the prince bodily by the shoulder and yanked him upright.

"Don't jostle his spine around!" suggested Lynn.

The prince gasped and his eyes flashed open.

"Who goes there!?" the prince shouted. He flailed his arms around blindly, feeling through the blackness and groping at the silvery mist. The fog receded at his skeletal fingers.

"It's just us," Erendor returned.

"Uh— you're a prince, remember? Brother Lyndor! Tonight is your coronation, and we've been looking for you for years, eighteen years to be exact since the day you were born. Hey! It's nice to finally meet you, bro!"

Erendor reached forward and hugged his long-lost brother hard.

"I thought I'd never get to see you!" Erendor laughed. "It's so good to meet ya now that you're not my creepy, newborn twin!"

"I'm nineteen," the prince grunted. He didn't hug Erendor back; he

grabbed the prince bodily by the shoulder and yanked him upright.

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"I thought I'd never get to see you!" Erendor laughed. "It's so good to meet ya now that you're not my creepy, newborn twin!"

The boy stood up, and the shadows engulfed him.

"Don't go!" Erendor said as the man slipped out of reach. "No!"

"My name is David Blayne, and I want nothing to do with the Kingdom of Endial!" The flames glowed red in David's brown eyes, and he lunged into the blackness, vanishing.

"Lyndor, come back!" Erendor yelled. He began staggering through the shadows of the night. His boots scraped against the mud, and the gnarled roots gripped his toes. A hand like ice grabbed his arm.

Erendor screamed and wrestled himself away. He fell into the darkness and hid his face in his hands.

An owl screeched.

Erendor gasped and blinked his eyes open.

Silver light pooled into his irises, sparkling and shimmering, pulsating through the blackness. For naught the moon strayed from her course, yet more light filtered through, casting a brighter light.

With a closer glow and a hotter glare, her flames drew nearer.

Lynn stood above her little brother with both of their burning torches.

Erendor fought to keep the pain out of his voice.

He failed.

"He's gone. He's gone, and he wasn't even Lyndor!" Erendor said. His hands shook, and he shivered in the sting of the night.

A couple of spiders tried to scuttle up his legs. Lynn crouched down and scooped their cold, segmented bodies into her hands.

"Erendor," Lynn whispered. The firelight glowed orange and amber upon her skin.

Erendor couldn't speak but Lynn did.

"He said he didn't know there was a kingdom," Lynn began, "but he also said he wants nothing to do with the Kingdom of Endia. Both cannot be true. Come, little friend. Rise. I'll help you."

"How?" Erendor said. He gripped his sister's hand, and she hauled him upright.

"Like that," Lynn said calmly.

Erendor's head shook so hard his hair trembled.

"Not helping me stand! Helping me find our brother!"

Lynn examined her little brother's drawn face and tapped his shoulder. Stand straighter.

"That was only the first step, Erendor," and she led the way forward into the wide-open shadows of the whispering forest.

### Solitude: A Child's Perspective By: Cecilia Dotson

It was dark the first time I opened my eyes. Minimal light shone through the dusty curtains, allowing me to see the contents around me. Covered by a soft and cozy white comforter, I realized I was in a large bed, huddled in the northwesternmost tip of the mattress. I immediately jumped out of bed, eager to explore this strange land. I slowly walked out through the room's entrance, noticing the tinker bell pajamas that clung to my body. Turning the corner of the hallway, I was met by a throne built of black wood, claimed by a large woman sitting in the center, writing on pieces of paper. Her short, red hair stood out against the dark environment, intriguing my curiosity.

"Good morning, Neyna!" she said, snapping me out of my thoughts.

"Good morning, Mami!" I instinctively replied as I walked to a nearby desk. "So, this woman must be my mother?" I thought to myself as I grabbed a sheet of printed paper and headed back to my room. This interaction was the first time I established a memory, an experience in which I began to understand my environment.

Over time, as my life progressed, I learned about my brothers and grandmother, who lived under the same roof. I learned about distant relatives, who visited us daily and practiced familial rituals that strengthened our bond. I began school and indulged in the exciting, academic competition for knowledge. I learn about the concept of friendships and about other variations of relationships. Surrounded by a community that thrived on socialization and collectivism, I was constantly submersed in the wild waves of humanity.

Yet, I still felt as if I were in the room.

Alone.

Consumed by darkness.

No matter how hard I tried to escape, all I knew was silence and darkness. No matter how much I tried to play with my brothers, they always pushed me into the dark silent hallway. No matter how much I whined for my grandmother to take me for the day, the door would be shut in my face, confining me within the four tiny walls of my small home. It did not matter how much I would beg my mother to play with me as she slept all day in her bed; I would be greeted with either no response or a rageful "NO!"

Biologically, as social creatures, we thrive in social interactions and structures. Yet, I could not conform to my biological nature. Was I an anomaly? A freak of nature, who yearned for the dark instead of the light? Or was I a victim of conditioning, adapting to a cold and harsh tundra within the humid wetlands?



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