

INSIDE:

A spotlight on students' work

Page 3

NOTICIAS EN ESPAÑOL

Acampar con un propósito: una aventura llena de naturaleza

Pagina 5

INSIDE:



'It's a dance of the people'

Page 6

INSIDE:



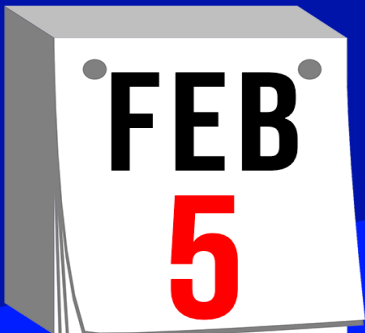
'Last gift from the holidays'

Page 7

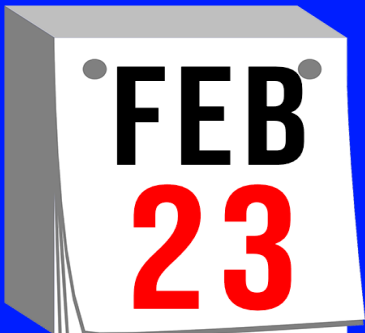
PRIMARIES APPROACH

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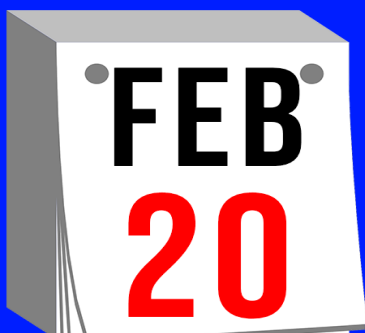
BEGINS!



VOTER REGISTRATION DEADLINE



LAST DAY TO APPLY FOR BALLOT BY MAIL



EARLY VOTING STARTS



ELECTION DAY



Eduardo Cortez/THE RIDER GRAPHIC

Yamilet Galvez

THE RIDER

Feb. 5 is the last day to register to vote and to submit an address change for the upcoming primary elections in March.

If voters would like to cast their vote by mail, the last day to apply for a ballot by mail is Feb. 23, according to the Texas Secretary of State website. Mail-in ballots must be submitted to the county in which the voter resides by Election Day, March 5.

Early voting starts Feb. 20 and ends March 1.

Polls will open at 7 a.m. and close at 7 p.m. from Feb. 20 to Feb. 24 and Feb. 26 to March 1 in Hidalgo County.

In Cameron County, early voting will take place from Feb. 20 to March 1. For a schedule of voting hours at the 19 polling sites, visit the county's website.

One hundred fifty seats in the Texas House of Representatives and 15 seats of the Texas Senate will be up for election.

Republicans and Democrats will vote for their respective nominee for U.S. president, as well as U.S. senator and representatives, plus state and county officeholders.

Andrew Smith, an assistant professor of political science and pre-law adviser, told The Rider about the key issues regarding the upcoming election.

"Certainly the economy, broadly speaking, is going to be on people's minds," Smith said. "Here, in the [Rio Grande] Valley, immigration concerns are going to be in a lot of

See VOTE, Page 3

Leonard Reese: 'A light' missing from campus

Natalie Lapsley

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

On Jan. 4, UTRGV Dining posted to Instagram, honoring the late Leonard Reese, "a dedicated cook" who served at the university for eight years.

Reese, who died Jan. 2 at age 68, brought "joy and warmth to the hearts of everyone he encountered," the announcement reads. "His eight years of service were marked not only by his commitment, but also by the countless moments of camaraderie and laughter he shared with everyone around him. Leonard left an [incredible] mark on our community, and his absence will be deeply felt.

"Our thoughts and condolences go out to his family, friends, and all those who had the privilege of knowing him."

A graduate of the culinary school Le Cordon Bleu, Reese served as president of Toastmasters while residing in California, taught dance while residing in Houston and worked as a chef, according to his obituary published on darlingmouser.com.

Felicios Cantu, a Dining services supervisor who worked closely with Reese for about two years, told The Rider that when he met Reese, the two of them "bumped heads a lot" at first. However, as their first year together went on, they became "very close."

"It took a toll on me," Cantu said about Reese's death. "... It's been very quiet

there in [El] Comedor [on the Brownsville campus.] From last year to this year, we've noticed a difference in students go down, because they liked his cooking. They liked the way he was. So, big change."

He said Reese talked about his time working at a French kitchen in Austin.

"I mean, his love for the food was just something that I've never experienced before," Cantu said. "... I don't think I've ever come across somebody that their love for food was like Leonard's."

Describing Reese as passionate and honest, Cantu said his colleague was at work at 6:30 a.m. every morning. He never took credit for someone else's food and he was a jokester.

"He was one of the sweetest, most, you know, noble persons I'd ever met," he said. "I know that a lot of people, when somebody passes away, they say, 'We lost a good one.'"

"Well, honestly, this one was a very good one. Leonard was just somebody ... special in my life, because I looked forward to coming to work because of Leonard."

Reese is survived by his mother, Frances D. Reese; sister, Coral Graham; aunts, Linda Bradshaw, Judy Zink and Cathy King; cousins, Freddy Bradshaw, Jeff Bradshaw, John Zink, Gina Zink, Lance Harris, Roxanne Harris and Rhonda Miller; and his nieces and nephews Savannah Solis, Ryan Solis, Natalie Solis, Damian Jacob Solis and Hailey Galarza.

See MEMORY, Page 2



Leonard Reese

COURTESY PHOTO

THE RIDER

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

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Monday Sundaes on Mondays
The **Student Union** will serve free **ice cream sundaes** from noon to 1 p.m. at the Student Union veranda on the Brownsville campus and at the same time in the Student Union Commons on the Edinburg campus.

Art Exhibition, Guest Artist
The School of Art and Design will present an exhibition by **Tim McCool**, an Austin-based artist, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. in the Rusteberg Art Gallery in Brownsville. Admission is **free**.

Tuesday Doughnut Social
Talk About It UTRGV and Student Health will serve free **doughnuts** and **hot chocolate** from 10 a.m. to noon outside the University Library on the Edinburg campus.

Student Leadership Academy
The **Student Leadership Academy** will host a **meeting** to provide students with development opportunities from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. in Main Building Room 2.402 on the Brownsville campus. Food and goodies will be provided.

Wednesday Zumba University Recreation
will host a **zumba session** from 5:30 to 6:15 p.m. in the University Recreation Center on the Edinburg campus.

Thursday Free Lunch
The **Baptist Student Ministry** will serve **free food** from 11:45 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. in the Music, Science & Learning Center on the Brownsville campus.

Greek Life Mixer
Fraternity and Sorority Life will host a **mixer** from noon to 2 p.m. at the University Center Ballroom on the Edinburg campus. Food and goodies will be provided.

Billiards Tournament
The **Student Union** will host a **billiards tournament** from 2 to 3:30 p.m. in the Student Union Game Room on the Edinburg campus and at the same time in the Game Room on the Brownsville campus. Winners will receive VBucks. A student ID is required to compete.

Friday Gloria Trevi
Latin pop singer **Gloria Trevi** will perform from 8 p.m. to midnight at the Payne Arena, located at 2600



POLICE REPORTS

The following are among the incidents reported to University Police between Jan. 9 and 14.

Jan. 9 10:45 a.m.: An employee on the Edinburg campus reported receiving an alert stating someone in another state was using his wife's Social Security number. After further investigation, it was found the Social Security number had not been used. No crime occurred.

5:37 p.m.: A Bursar Office employee on the Edinburg campus reported being \$50 over in her cash register count after discovering two \$50 bills stuck together.

Jan. 10 8:19 p.m.: University Police observed three men via closed-circuit TV cameras attempting to cross the U.S. border fence near Lot B-1 on the Brownsville campus. U.S. Border Patrol located and detained the three men after conducting a search in the surrounding area with the assistance

of University Police.

Jan. 11 9:53 a.m.: A concerned parent reported not being able to communicate with her daughter who is a student. University Police located the student at her off-campus residence and confirmed her well-being. The parent was updated on her daughter's status.

11:45 a.m.: An employee reported that food items had been stolen from her personal refrigerator in her office in the Learning Center on the Edinburg campus. The incident is under investigation.

11:56 a.m.: Officers responded to a verbal dispute between a husband and his wife in Lot E-16 on the Edinburg campus. Upon further investigation, University Police determined no crime occurred.



12:08 p.m.: A student reported finding a non-aggressive dog outside her dorm in the Casa Bella apartments on the Brownsville campus. The dog was lured away from the front door and animal control was notified.

Jan. 12 1:02 p.m.: An officer observed a non-affiliated man and woman who were having a verbal disagreement at the Student Union on the Edinburg campus. After further investigation, it was determined that no crime occurred.

7:45 p.m.: University Police assisted U.S. Border Patrol in the search of three individuals who were observed crossing the border fence and running north in Lot B-1 on the Brownsville campus. Border Patrol agents located and apprehended two of the subjects who were identified as

N. 10th St. in Hidalgo. Ticket prices vary.

Saturday Lunar New Year Festival
The **International Museum of Art & Science** will celebrate the **Year of the Dragon** at the **12th annual Lunar New Year Festival**, featuring traditional Chinese, Korean and Taiwanese crafts, calligraphy, games, performances and more from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at 1900 W. Nolana Ave. in McAllen. Admission is \$5 for adults and \$3 for children ages 4 to 12.

Sunday Vocal Performance
Diane Taylor, a soprano and part-time lecturer of voice for the **UTRGV School of Music**, will perform from 3 to 5 p.m. at the Texas Southmost College Performing Arts Center in Brownsville. Admission is free. RSVP on showpass.com for tickets.

--Compiled by Alfredo Garcia Jr.

Corrections
A caption underneath a photograph of junior catcher Steven Lancia that was published on page 9 of the Jan. 16 issue of The Rider contained the wrong information. The caption should read as follows: Junior catcher Steven Lancia prepares to bat during a Fall 2023 intrasquad game at the UTRGV Baseball Stadium in Edinburg.

A caption underneath a photograph of New Year's resolutions posted to a window that was published on page 10 of the Jan. 16 issue of The Rider contained the wrong information. The caption should read as follows: New Year's resolutions should be "something attainable that isn't too much of a reach from what you're doing right now," according to Grant Benham, a psychological science professor and director of the Psychological Science Department's Stress and Health Lab.

A caption next to a photograph of Rider A&E reporter Silvana Villarreal on Page 4 of the Jan. 16 issue of The Rider contained the wrong information. The caption should read as follows: My year's resolutions are to drive better, be nicer and fall a little less.

Page 11 of the Jan. 16 issue of The Rider contained a wrong photograph. Below is the correct photo and caption.

Andres Estrada/THE RIDER
A trash bin at Tony Gonzalez Park holds Christmas trees that will be recycled into mulch.



MEMORY
Continued from Page 1

Several members of the campus community replied to the post with condolences, prayers or stories of Reese, including Gabriela Azuara, a UTRGV outreach representative who first met Reese as a student in 2015.

"I met Mr. Reese when I was actually a freshman at UTRGV and I was working for the Student Union at the time," Azuara said in an interview with The Rider. "... I would see Mr. Reese pretty much whenever I was on the clock, which was, like, every day and he was always really sweet."

She said one of her favorite memories of Reese is the fact that he always interacted with the community.

"He always remembered me and remembered to ask how I was doing in my studies and how my goals were coming along," Azuara said, adding that even after years of not seeing him, she was surprised to find he remembered her.

"When I went back again, I thought, 'Oh, you know ... I

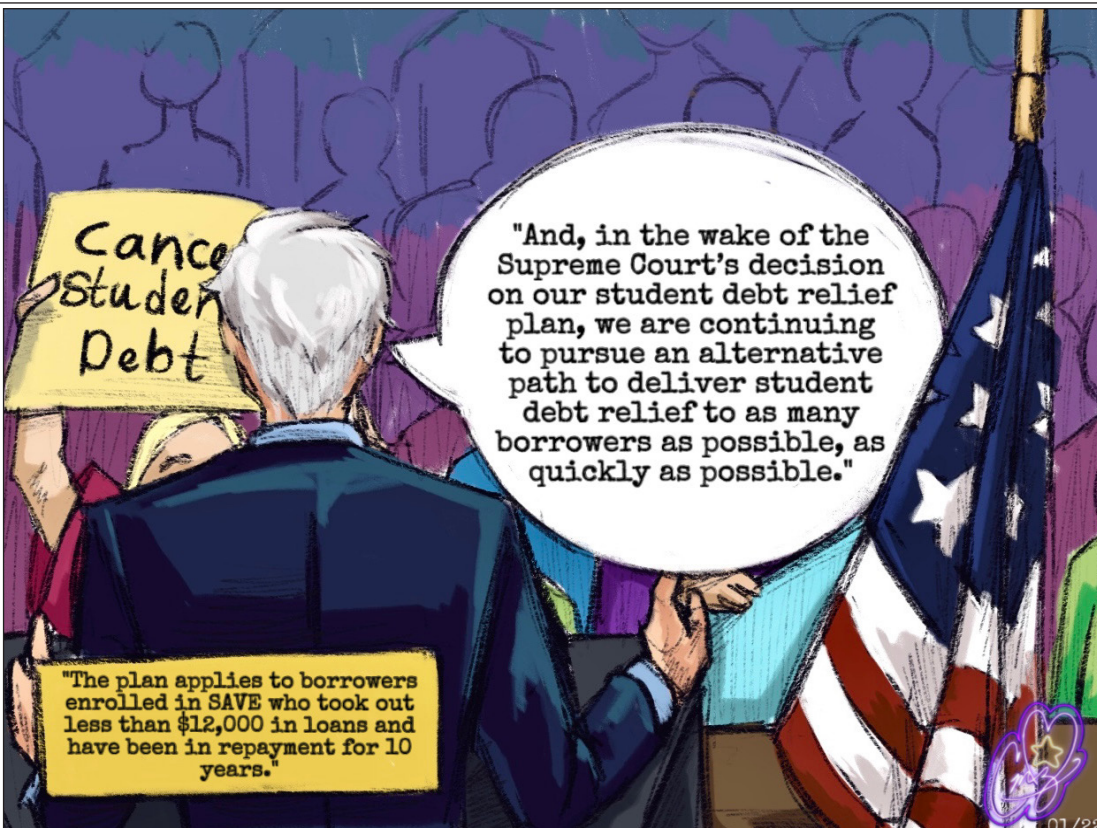
haven't seen Leonard in, like, probably three years by now,'" she said. "But as soon as he saw me, he was like, 'Oh my gosh. I haven't seen you in forever.'"

Reese "really took the time to get to know everyone that he had an interaction with," Azuara said, adding that he often advised students to make the most out of the opportunities available to them.

"He was really good at sharing with students, in particular with me, about making good decisions and being very dedicated to what you do," she said. "I know a lot of students missed him and I just send out my condolences to his family and everybody affected by his death because I know that it definitely feels like a light is missing from campus."

Cantu said he wants the campus community to know that Reese "wanted to come back this semester and see everybody again, keep on being Leonard and keep doing his thing."

"I feel like we need a lot more people like Leonard in this world," he said. "I just want to say, you know, he's going to be very missed. I'm going to miss him a lot."



Sexism at the Golden Globes



Viviana Infante
REPORTER

It's the year 2024. Women's achievements are still being invalidated and ignored, and the Golden Globes proved it to millions of viewers in the country.

I was shocked but not too surprised to watch the various times where interviewers asked inappropriate and sexist questions before the show. Ayo Edebiri, a star of the comedy-drama series "The Bear," was asked what she thinks about her co-star's recent Calvin Klein ad instead of asking her anything else about her career. Jennifer Lopez was asked if she knew if her marriage with Ben Affleck would actually last. Leonardo DiCaprio was questioned on how he "mentored" Lily Gladstone, to which he replied not needing to help her at all.

One of the most talked about controversies from the show was Jo Koy's opening

monologue, where he joked that the "Barbie" movie was based on "a plastic doll with big boobies" in comparison to "Oppenheimer," where he described it was based on a "Pulitzer Prize-winning book." Worse was the "character-actor" line, where he mentioned "Barbie" went "from perfect beauty to bad breath, cellulite and flat feet," completely disregarding the important feminist conversations that the film tried to foster.

Even if Koy was limited on time to create jokes for his hosting gig and had to include the jokes of other writers, I find

the event revealed how sexism still weaves itself into the film industry.

I guess I just find it odd that men were not asked these same questions about their female co-stars and their personal lives. However, we know that media outlets did not because they knew the criticism they would receive from doing so. So, why did they not consider this when they thought asking women oversexualized and inappropriate questions was a good idea? Why ask these types of questions at all?

This shows that no matter how much women succeed and how impactful our ideas are on our Western society, there is still so much conversation that needs to be held in order for us to recognize where our biases lie. That means looking outward to recognize how sexism is institutional and reshaping how women and feminine-presenting people are stereotypically seen as weaker and more-easily objectifiable than cisgender men.

This also means looking inward and analyzing how we have internalized sexism and decolonizing what has been taught to us.

Instead of focusing on a hot Calvin Klein campaign or someone's love life, let's reflect on what is more important here.

This shows that no matter how much women succeed and how impactful our ideas are on our Western society, there is still so much conversation that needs to be held in order for us to recognize where our biases lie.

it hard to comprehend why exactly the choice of comedy was to target the physical appearances of women. Much of what was going on at the Golden Globes projected misogyny and undermined the accomplishments of female directors and actors. A few at

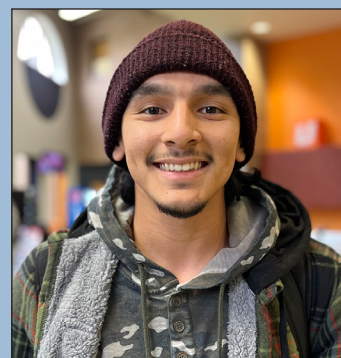


What makes you feel alive?



Kendra Benavidez
theatre freshman

"I would say what makes me feel alive is just getting out of the house, like, going to stores like Target or Hobby Lobby, and I would say that is what makes me feel most alive."



Fabian Sosa
Spanish translation and interpreting senior

"For me, personally, I'm a follower of Jesus, and so what makes me feel alive is following his Word and seeing other people come to know Jesus like I know him."



Adriana Sanchez
psychology freshman

"The thing that makes me feel alive is seeing my dog every day and taking him outside, and just overall, like, having his presence around me is something that makes me feel alive."



Sheila De Leon
exercise science sophomore

"I would say, coffee, my dogs and watching 'Gilmore Girls.'"

--Compiled and photos by Aura Velasquez and Daniela Martinez Salazar



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Acampar con un propósito: una aventura llena de naturaleza

Fatima Gamez Lopez
EDITORA DE ESPAÑOL

Si lo tuyo es ayudar y explorar la naturaleza, el Centro de Recreación Universitaria y el Centro para la Participación Estudiantil han organizado una aventura de campamento de cuatro noches para estudiantes durante las vacaciones de primavera en el Parque Estatal Garner. Del 9 al 13 de marzo, los asistentes contribuirán a la preservación del parque.

La inscripción está abierta hasta el 15 de febrero. Para participar, los estudiantes deben asistir a una reunión previa al viaje, que se llevará a cabo a las 5 p.m. el 20 de febrero en el Salón Bougainvillea de la Unión Estudiantil en el campus de Brownsville y a la misma hora el 22 de febrero en la sala de conferencias del Centro Recreativo Universitario en el campus de Edinburg.

La tarifa del viaje es de \$100 por participante, con un plan de pago disponible. El pago pendiente es antes de la reunión previa al viaje.

Para registrarse, visite el sitio web de UREC (por sus siglas en inglés) y en la sección “Aventuras al aire libre”, haga clic en la pestaña “Viajes”.

Nora Galvan, coordinadora de actividades acuáticas y aventuras al aire libre, dijo que el costo del viaje incluye transporte, equipo de campamento y comida.

Galvan dijo que antes de la colaboración con CSI (por sus siglas en inglés) el costo del viaje superaba los \$250.

“Ahora, con la colaboración con Participación Estudiantil, [podemos] brindar más a los estudiantes”, dijo. “Entonces, antes de colaborar, para mí era un viaje muy caro para un estudiante universitario. Y sólo pudimos proporcionar transporte y nuestro equipo para actividades al aire libre”.

Galvan dijo que el itinerario será similar al viaje del año pasado al Parque Estatal Garner.

Los estudiantes explorarán el aire libre, caminarán y contribuirán a la comunidad como voluntarios.

“El Parque Estatal Garner está en Concan, y Uvalde está a unos 30 minutos”, dijo Galvan. “Entonces, uno de los días fuimos a Uvalde, e hicimos una limpieza del parque, y luego la persona en cargo [...] nos acompañó hasta los murales [...] [de] las personas que fallecieron en el tiroteo [de la Escuela Primaria Robb]. [...] Entonces, fue muy significativo”.

Los asistentes permanecerán en el parque durante la noche.



FOTO CORTESÍA DEL CENTRO DE RECREACIÓN UNIVERSITARIA

Varios estudiantes de UTRGV caminan durante su visita al Parque Estatal Garner el año pasado. El viaje de este año se llevará a cabo del 9 al 13 de marzo, durante las vacaciones de primavera. La inscripción está abierta hasta el 15 de febrero. El costo es de \$100 por participante, con un límite de 16 estudiantes que pueden asistir al viaje.

“Acampamos ahí en nuestras tiendas de campaña”, dijo Galvan. “Les damos sacos de dormir. Les damos una colchoneta para dormir y ahí es donde duermen”.

El viaje está limitado a 16 estudiantes. Todavía quedan 10 plazas disponibles, según su sitio web.

Juan Zermeno, un estudiante de último año de ciencias del ejercicio, asistió al viaje el año pasado.

“Fuimos al Parque Estatal Garner; está arriba por la zona de Uvalde”, dijo Zermeno. “Mientras estuvimos ahí, tuvimos la oportunidad de participar en actividades de voluntariado, como ayudar al parque estatal a colocar señales en algunos de los senderos que se han caído o se han arrugado

con el paso de los años. Y entonces ayudamos a colocar esos letreros e hicimos una caminata dirigida por un guardaparques”.

Dijo que durante el viaje aprendió a señalar la flora y fauna local de la zona y a qué prestar atención en caso de emergencias.

“En general, fue muy educativo”, dijo Zermeno. “Y luego hubo un día de todo ese viaje en el que fuimos a la comunidad de Uvalde y limpiamos su parque. [...] En general, fue una excelente manera de pasar las vacaciones de primavera [...] y fue una gran oportunidad para simplemente divertirnos”.

Su amor por acampar motivó a Zermeno a ir al viaje el año pasado.

“He estado acampando desde que era joven con mi padre”, dijo. “Y entonces, era solo una manera de salir y no tener que preocuparme por planificar todo un viaje de campamento yo solo. [...] Me permitió ir a acampar con otras personas, lo cual es una experiencia poco común para mí. Tenía un par de amigos que también estaban en el viaje. Eso me impulsó a venir con ellos”.

Damaris Garza, una estudiante de primer año de ciencias de la salud integrada, no sabía sobre el viaje, pero cree que es una idea increíble que ayudará a los estudiantes a participar en el servicio comunitario fuera de la universidad.

Galvan dijo que el principal beneficio del viaje es visitar un lugar nuevo y aprender nuevas habilidades.

“El año pasado fue la primera vez que algunos estudiantes visitaron Garner para aprender habilidades al aire libre y [...] aprender sobre la naturaleza y ayudar a la comunidad y hacer unas vacaciones de primavera alternativas”, dijo.



Estefania Ramirez/THE RIDER

Nombre: Ekin Baris Ozenir
Carrera: Ingeniería informática
Clasificación: Estudiante de segundo año
Fecha de graduación: Primavera 2026
Ciudad natal: Mersin, Turquía

Actividades extracurriculares: “Yo juego al ajedrez. En realidad, formó parte del equipo de ajedrez de UTRGV”.

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

“Casi todo. Puedo decir las reglas [y] cómo vive la gente. Lo único similar es el clima, pero el resto es diferente”.

¿Qué hay en tu lista de deseos? “Oh, Dios mío. Quiero viajar. Esto es algo que quiero hacer. Empecé a viajar en el verano, desde que empecé la universidad. Hasta ahora fui a [la] República Checa, España [y] Francia. Me gustaría seguir viajando. Quiero ver Portugal; ese es un lugar al que quiero ir”.

¿Quién es tu ejemplo a seguir?

“Desde que era un niño, la gente me preguntaba, como cuando hacía entrevistas sobre ajedrez y esas cosas, pero realmente no tenía un modelo a seguir en mi vida. Había gente, por supuesto. Trataba de ser como ellos, pero no fue un modelo a seguir para mí. Era como si viera gente haciendo cosas buenas. Era como, ‘Está bien, hay algo bueno que puedo intentar implementar en mi vida’”.

¿Por qué elegiste la carrera en la que estás? “En Turquía tenemos un examen universitario en el que realmente no puedes elegir [una] especialidad [...] pero cuando apliqué aquí, me di cuenta de que puedo elegir lo que quiera. Así que, quería hacer ingeniería, pero no sabía qué quería hacer. Así que mi madre tenía algunos amigos y fui a hablar con ellos. Había un tipo que estaba haciendo ingeniería informática. Había un ingeniero eléctrico y cuando hablé con ellos me di cuenta de que la ingeniería informática sería buena para mí”.

¿Qué consejo le darías a otros estudiantes internacionales? “Creo que es importante, ya sabes, interactuar con la gente de la comunidad. Es un lugar nuevo, pero cuando te reúnes con la gente, entonces es más agradable y la universidad tiene muchas posibilidades para hacer muchas cosas. Así que, es como si usarlos siempre fuera bueno y un poco importante. Mi opinión es usar todos los recursos que tienen aquí, son muy útiles. [...] Son buenos para usar”.

--Recopilado por Fatima Gamez Lopez



FOTO CORTESÍA DEL CENTRO DE RECREACIÓN UNIVERSITARIA

Los estudiantes de UTRGV posan durante el viaje al Parque Estatal Garner del año pasado organizado por el Centro de Recreación Universitaria y el Centro para la Participación Estudiantil.

Encuéntranos en Redes Sociales

‘It’s a dance of the people’

Silvana Villarreal
A&E REPORTER

A fast-moving, passionate style of dance and slow, elegant and colorful movements are some of the features to expect from “Spanish Nights,” a Ballet *Español* performance at 7:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday in the Performing Arts Complex on the Edinburg campus.

The Dance Department at UTRGV will present a blend of traditional Spanish dances, such as flamenco, tango, *folklórico* and *escuela bolera*.

Sonia Chapa, a lecturer for the Department of Dance and a choreographer, said a live guitarist and singer will accompany the performance. Preparations began last August. Since then, the company has been working toward perfecting their dance performance.

The production will feature choreography from Chapa, Fred Darsow, a dance associate professor, as well as performances learned during Ballet *Español*’s trip last summer to the *Amor de Dios* dance institute in Madrid.

“The impact of the Spain trip really got [the dance company] to be very serious about dedicating themselves to practicing and getting better at another level with their Spanish dancing [and] their performance skills,” Chapa said. “So, they’ve been working really hard and we’re excited. We’re getting everything ready and having everything prepared.”

Chapa said the students enjoy learning about styles of dance from different regions in Spain and how they celebrate their culture.

“So, it’s all about culture and history and really serving and being very conscious and very aware that we are a Hispanic-serving institute,” she said.

Jennifer Jimenez, a dance senior who will perform Friday and Saturday night, said dancing flamenco is an art form that communicates what you want to express to an audience.

“It’s like the story that you’re telling and I feel very connected with it only because I never felt one to be very competitive,” Jimenez said. “... With flamenco and Spanish dance, it’s pure growth on the classical aspects of this genre.”

The student dancer said “I feel powerful,” because there is a strength required to be able to perform on stage with this specific genre and props like castanets and colorful costumes.

“I feel so strong because I definitely don’t feel like myself,” Jimenez said. “I feel like a better person on stage. I feel like I am doing something that not everyone sees from me every day.”

She said because the UTRGV community is so close to the border, *folklórico* dances bring pride and a



PHOTOS COURTESY FERNANDO GONZALEZ

Ballet *Español* will perform at 7:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday in the UTRGV Performing Arts Complex on the Edinburg campus. Tickets cost \$15 for general admission, \$10 for UTRGV students and senior citizens, and \$5 for children. Tickets are available at utrgv.edu/arts.



Ballet *Español* performs during “Spanish Nights” January 2023 in the UTRGV Performing Arts Complex on the Edinburg campus. The dance concert consists of Spanish folkloric dances, classical Spanish dances and a fusion of modern and traditional flamenco.

different meaning to Hispanic culture.

“Performances like these do have a different meaning to them,” Jimenez said. “And it’s not just about like the super wow factor; it’s just a story that we are portraying.”

Daniel Alejandro Garcia, a dance senior who has been with the company for more than five years, said the performances have been updated to 2024 norms.

“This is a really big thing for not only the company, but the show itself,” Garcia said. “There’s also updated gender norms when it comes to who can wear a *manton*, or a shawl, or what type of dancing.”

In March, the company will be moving

on to the American College Dance Association Festival, where they will showcase their Spanish dances at the University of Texas at Austin.

“To be able to send in a piece and then perform it in front of other universities, it definitely feels like we’re starting to grow at such a high level, especially because the dream is like eventually to move on,” Jimenez said. “Like for me personally, I would like to get a master’s in flamenco.”

Tickets cost \$15 for general admission, \$10 for UTRGV students and senior citizens, and \$5 for children. Tickets are available at utrgv.edu/arts.



BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS:

Christian Saldaña
computer science senior
“Brisingr” by Christopher Paolini

Fatima Cazares
English freshman
“Catching Fire” by Suzanne Collins

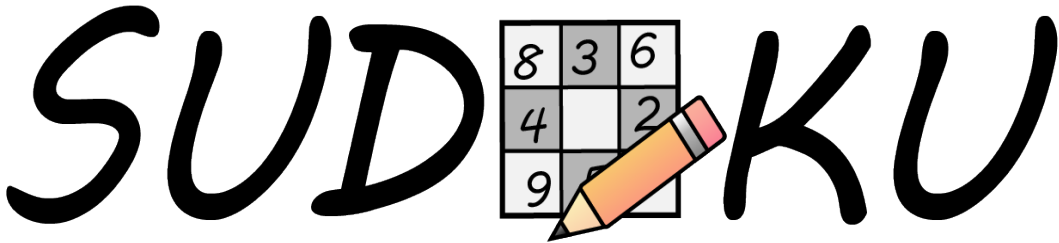
Fatima Lara
exercise science freshman
“Off-Campus” series by Elle Kennedy

Nathan Orive
engineering technology senior
“Hatchet” by Gary Paulsen

Alfredo Bonilla
biology junior
“Lightlark” by Alex Aster

Natalia Valdes
finance freshman
“Catching Fire” by Suzanne Collins

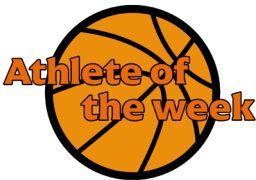
Jorge Vasquez
computer science senior
“1984” George Orwell



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

Jan. 16 puzzle answer key:

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



Ahren Freeman



Ali Halloum/THE RIDER

Sociology senior Ahren Freeman is a forward for the UTRGV Men’s Basketball Team. Freeman is playing his second season in a Vaqueros uniform.

Q: Can you tell us a fun fact about yourself?

A: “A fun fact about myself is that I love dogs. I’m a very big dog person. No matter what dog it is.”

Q: Who or what got you started in basketball?

A: “I would say growing up watching Dwayne Wade. That’s my favorite player, so he really inspired me.”

Q: Who’s been your biggest inspiration or role model?

A: “Outside of basketball, it’s probably my dad, just because of everything he’s taught me throughout the years, you know what I’m saying. [He] molded me into the man I am today.”

Q: What kind of music do you like to listen to?

A: “I’m a very big hip-hop guy. I mix some R&B in there sometimes, you know, and when my girl’s around, a little country.”

Q: Any shows or movies you like to watch?

A: “Right now, I’m watching ‘Suits.’ I’m on season three of that [and] I’m really hooked on that right now. And then, one of my favorite movies is probably ‘[Fast Five]’ when they were in Rio, in Brazil.”

Q: What is your biggest motivation?

A: “Basketball is just really pushing me right now. [It is] taking me down a road in life that I really didn’t think I would be at, and it’s just opening a lot of doors for me.”

Q: What do you like the most about UTRGV?

A: “The culture. Everybody is very welcoming and warm and everybody wants to see you succeed.”

Q: What are your biggest goals?

A: “One of my biggest goals is to win a [Western Athletic Conference] championship for the school.”

--Compiled by Ali Halloum

‘Last gift from the holidays’



Abigail Ollave/THE RIDER

UTRGV Athletics hosted two ceremonies for the grand opening of the UTRGV Soccer and Track & Field Complex facilities last Wednesday on the Edinburg campus. The upgrades include locker rooms for both men’s and women’s soccer and track & field teams, head coach and staff offices, and a sports medicine facility.

Jose Medina

SPORTS REPORTER

The UTRGV Department of Intercollegiate Athletics held a grand opening for the Soccer and Track & Field Complex locker rooms last Wednesday.

The locker rooms cost an estimated \$10 million and were funded by the \$85 million investment going toward athletics.

The 13,500 square foot building holds locker rooms, office space for the staff, a sports medicine facility and training rooms.

will be a place for our student athletes to be able to train, team bonding ... a place for you to rehab, a place for you to heal and truly a place for you to call your own.”

Mark Foster, women’s soccer team head coach, and Bryheem Hancock, men’s soccer team head coach, said they were grateful for all the people involved in the creation of the building.

After the student athletes saw the building, Foster said he felt proud to see the excitement in the students’ faces when they walked inside the facility.

He said moments like this are what

“When recruits are being recruited they’re going to visit multiple schools,” Foster said. “For us to know that any kid that comes on our campus, they’re going to struggle to find better facilities than this. When they come in, this is going to blow their socks off.”

Hancock said the team has done well in academics, community service, and now they aim to do well in the Western Athletic Conference.

Alexis Gonzalez, sophomore goalkeeper for the men’s soccer team, said they are ready to work hard during the spring to excel during the fall.

“We’re really excited,” Gonzalez said. “We love the new locker room. It came out really amazing.”

He said he felt like a kid walking into the building and it was like a last gift from the holidays.

Savannah Frisby, junior forward for the women’s soccer team, said she was happy to have the facility and by how fast it was built.

“Personally, I’m really excited to have the built-in speakers to blast music and get hyped up before the games,” Frisby said. “I think it’s a really nice room and I’m excited to be able to put it to good use.”

“When they come in, this is going to blow their socks off.”

-- Mark Foster, women's soccer head coach

During the opening ceremony, Chasse Conque, vice president and director of Athletics, said the department was “fired up” to have the grand opening as well as thankful to everyone who assisted in the construction of the facility.

“We have ... nine capital projects, facility investments that are happening right now in our athletics department and it takes a village,” Conque said. “Nearly 14,000 square feet that will benefit our student athletes. ... This

he will remember for a long time.

“Seeing that joy and seeing them taking pictures,” Foster said. “Even simple things like when they open the locker and see that there’s a charger port for their phone, you know that’s important for kids now. Days like this certainly live long in the memory and it’s a great day.”

The Rider asked Foster what the impact of the facility is regarding recruiting student athletes. He replied, it elevates UTRGV.

MEN'S BASKETBALL
6:30 p.m. Thursday
vs. California Baptist University
AT THE UTRGV FIELDHOUSE

THIS WEEK IN SPORTS

WOMEN'S TENNIS
11 a.m. Sunday
vs. Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi
ORVILLE I. COX TENNIS CENTER

MEN'S TENNIS
2 p.m. Sunday
vs. Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi
ORVILLE I. COX TENNIS CENTER

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