

NEW H-1B VISA FEE COULD AFFECT HIRING

ETHAN MALDONADO
THE RIDER

A new \$100,000 fee on H-1B visa petitions is likely to push employers to be more selective about whom they sponsor, according to a UTRGV assistant professor.

The rule, which took effect Sept. 21, applies to new H-1B petitions and is part of a broader federal effort to prioritize U.S. workers. Employers who wish to sponsor foreign employees for specialized roles must now account for the higher application fee in addition to existing legal and filing costs, according to a White House proclamation.

“Many companies will make a calculation and decide that unless somebody is really, really talented and their value is much higher than the \$100,000 plus compensation, they’re just not going to hire anymore,” said Armando Lopez-Velasco, assistant professor for the Department of Economics at UTRGV. See **VISA**, Page 3



THE RIDER FILE PHOTO

A new federal rule implements a \$100,000 fee on H-1B visa petitions to persuade employers to prioritize U.S. workers.



STUDENTS NAVIGATE UNCERTAIN FUTURES

DAYRA GONZALEZ
THE RIDER

As graduation approaches, some students are expressing concerns about what comes next, including landing a job in their field and navigating life after college.

For some, that worry begins even before graduation. Gustavo Martinez, a counseling graduate student and vice president of the Creative Writing Club in Brownsville, said his job search started early but has faced some challenges.

“After high school, I applied to 33 different job openings across Cameron County,” Martinez said. “Most of them were unsuccessful due to my lack of experience, which was understandable.”

He said he eventually found a position at McDonald’s before transitioning to youth care work and, later,

teaching. Martinez added his persistence, along with university career events, helped him advance.

“It’s because of the recent Career & Internship Expo

“This is not a race; it’s a marathon.”

--Dorian Vazquez,
UTRGV alumnus

that I got my current job as a registered behavior technician,” he said.

Martinez wrote in an email sent to The Rider Oct. 18 concerns about how local hiring practices can impact graduates. He added “compadrisimo” and the “palanca system” continues to plague the Rio

Grande Valley, where it is not “what you know” or possess in terms of education, skills, among other qualifications but rather “who you know.”

Some alumni also recalled challenges in the transition from college to career.

Alan Govea, who graduated in 2019 with a bachelor’s degree in history, said entering the job market during the COVID-19 pandemic was difficult.

“My job search experience after graduating UTRGV was a little tricky,” Govea said. “There was really no job market to go after. ... A lot of industries were shutting down.”

He added having work experience made a difference as he had always worked full-time while studying, which helped him stand out to employers. See **STUDENTS**, Page 3

A DECADE OF RESEARCH SUCCESS

SOPHIA CORTEZ
THE RIDER

UTRGV reached a sum over \$100 million in research funding on Oct. 14, celebrating its 10-year anniversary and positioning the university one step closer to becoming a Carnegie R1 institution.

The Carnegie classification is a leading framework for recognizing institutional diversity in U.S. higher education, by 1970 it began supporting colleges and universities in their research and policy analysis programs, according to the website of Carnegie of Institution of Higher Education.

Can Saygin, senior vice president for Research and Dean of Graduate College, told The Rider achieving the \$103.7 million milestone is more than financial progress.

“The money is going toward graduate students, faculty time, equipment, laboratory methodologies and any infrastructure that’s really geared towards achieving these research goals,” Saygin said.

See **RESEARCH**, Page 3



THE RIDER FILE PHOTO

Biology senior Reese Nittler presents a “red blood cells and different solutions” model Nov. 19, 2024, in the Anatomy and Physiology One lab on the Brownsville campus.

BLOCK PARTY TACKLES HOMECOMING WEEK

EMMA CASTILLO
THE RIDER

Vaquero pride flooded the Chapel lawn Tuesday as students gathered for the UTRGV’s Homecoming Block Party, the event that kicked off a week of homecoming

celebrations.

Hosted by the Office of Student Activities, it featured free food, craft activities, a photobooth and live performances from local talent.

Read more on our website at www.utrgvrider.com



DRAYA RIOS/
THE RIDER

Artist Gilberto Capistran performs during the Homecoming Block Party Tuesday on the Chapel lawn on the Edinburg campus. Capistran’s performance was a part of Union Unplugged, a UTRGV music series which showcases local artists.

OPINION:

“The bane of my existence”

ESPAÑOL:

El valle en una taza

SPORTS:

Breaking through fall

LOCAL:

Immigration enforcement in Hidalgo County

THE RIDER

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

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Today

Monday Tabling

Christians at RGV will host a tabling event from 9:45 to 11:45 a.m. on the University Library lawn on the Brownsville campus.

Writing for Your Soul

Baptist Student Ministry will host a writing event from 11 a.m. to noon in the Health Affairs Building West gazebo on the Edinburg campus.

YDSA Raspas and Rosas

The Rio Grande Valley Youth Democratic Socialists of America will host a fundraiser selling raspas from 11 a.m. to noon on the Chapel lawn on the Edinburg campus.

College Dems

The RGV College Democrats will host a meet and greet with Tejano music star and Democratic candidate for TX-15, **Bobby Pulido**, from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m. in the PlainsCapital Bank Theater on the Edinburg campus.

K.I.S.S Meeting

The Korean International Student Society will meet from 3:15 to 4:45 p.m. and at the same time through Thursday in the Student Academic Center on the Edinburg campus.

RGV German Club Meeting

The RGV German Club will meet from 3:30 to 4:45 p.m. in Interdisciplinary Academic Building Room 1.204 on the Brownsville campus. Attendees can discuss **important topics** about the club.

Sundaes on Mondays

Student Union will host Sundaes on Mondays from

noon to 1 p.m. on the Edinburg campus. Attendees can enjoy **free ice cream. A student ID is required.**

Delta Zeta General Meeting

Delta Zeta will meet from 6 to 10 p.m. in the Bronc Room on the Edinburg campus.

Tuesday

Pre-PA Society Fundraiser

The Pre-Physician Assistant Society will host a **coffee fundraiser** from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. through Wednesday on the Quad on the Edinburg campus.

ACJA Meeting

The American Criminal Justice Association Sigma Kappa Chi will meet from 2 to 3 p.m. in Health Affairs Building West Room 1.274 on the Edinburg campus.

Air Hockey Tournament

Student Union will host an **air hockey tournament** from 1 to 2 p.m. in the Game Room on the Edinburg campus. Attendees can **register** for the competition on **V Link** or in person to win **V Bucks. A student ID is required.**

IMA Fundraiser!

The Association of Accountants and Financial Professionals in Business will host a fundraiser from 11:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. in the Student Union on the Edinburg campus.

Soul Painting

Baptist Student Ministry will host **soul painting** from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. in Troxel Hall on the Edinburg campus.

Run Club Meeting Practice

Club Running-Vaquero Runners will meet from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. and at the

same time Thursday outside the Life and Health Science Building on the Brownsville campus. Attendees can enjoy a **20-minute run.**

Coffee with Gammas

The Sigma Lambda Gamma National Sorority, Inc. will host a **coffee fundraiser** from 9:30 a.m. to noon in the Student Union on the Edinburg campus.

Wednesday

ENACTUS

Enactus will meet from 12:30 to 1:45 p.m. in Robert C. Vackar College of Business and Entrepreneurship Room 121 on the Edinburg campus. Attendees can enjoy **free food.**

BAA Meeting

Brownsville Accounting Association will meet from 5 to 6 p.m. in Music, Science and Learning Center Room 1.111 on the Brownsville campus.

ALPFA General Meeting

The Association of Latino Professionals For America will meet from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. in the Robert C. Vackar College of Business and Entrepreneurship Room 121 on the Edinburg campus.

Bible Study

Christians at RGV will host a Bible study from noon to 1:45 p.m. in Music, Science and Learning Center Room 1.217 on the Brownsville campus. **Free food** will be provided.

Spooktacular Movie Night

University Recreation and Campus Activities Board will host a **movie night** from 7 to 11 p.m. at the University Recreation Center

leisure pool on the Edinburg campus. **Free food will be provided.**

Thursday

Halloween Costume Contest

Student Union will host a **Halloween Costume Contest** from noon to 2 p.m. in the Student Union La Sala on the Brownsville campus and from 7 to 8:30 p.m. in the Student Union Theater Room 1.102 on the Edinburg campus. Attendees can **register** for the contest via **V Link** and a **student ID is required.**

Psychology Club General Meeting

Psychology Club will meet from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. in Student Academic Center Room 1.112 on the Edinburg campus.

Halloween Horror Movie Night

The Filipino Student Association will host a **Halloween Horror Movie Night Social** from 7:30 to 9 p.m. in Science Building Room 2.102 on the Edinburg campus.

Let's Glow Crazy Dance Party

Student Union will host a **Let's Glow Crazy Dance Party** from 8:30 to 10:30 p.m. on the Edinburg campus. Attendees can **enjoy free snacks, music and activities. A student ID is required.**

Friday

Dr. Pepper Hygiene Drive

The Intersectional Feminist Student Organization will host a **Dr. Pepper Fundraiser and a Hygiene Drive** from noon to 2 p.m. in the University Library courtyard on the Brownsville campus.

--Compiled by *Mariah Escobar*



POLICE REPORTS

The following are among the incidents reported to University Police between Oct. 13 and 18.

Oct. 13

8:29 a.m.: An officer responded to a welfare concern in Unity Hall on the Edinburg campus after a resident reported his roommate was possibly intoxicated and not responding properly. Emergency Medical Services transported the student to the hospital.

10:47 a.m.: An officer responded to a report of a student who was possibly stung by a bee in the Life and Health Sciences Building on the Brownsville campus. The student refused Emergency Medical Services but was taken to UT Health RGV Student Health for evaluation.

Oct. 14

9:04 a.m.: An officer responded to the Academic Support Facility on the Edinburg campus regarding an air conditioner that had

overheated due to a belt issue. Officers and the Edinburg Fire Department secured the building, cooled the motor with a fire extinguisher and the building was cleared for re-entry.

3:49 p.m.: Several unsecured doors were reported at the under-construction Visual Arts Complex on the Brownsville campus. An officer closed the doors that could be shut, and Facilities will post "No Trespassing" signs.

4:30 p.m.: A student reported his vehicle may have been burglarized in Lot E-9 on the Edinburg campus after discovering a missing air intake part in his engine. The case is under investigation.

Oct. 15

10:59 a.m.: An employee reported he struck his head on an open door in the Liberal Arts Building North on the Edinburg campus, sustaining a laceration that required stitches. He was treated at RGV Urgent Care hospital.

2:17 p.m.: A student reported his parked and unattended motorcycle was struck by an unknown vehicle in Lot E-19 on the Edinburg campus. CCTV footage showed the driver of a black SUV struck the motorcycle and, then, lifted it. The case is under investigation.

9:48 p.m.: An officer responded to a student who reported stress-related seizures in a bus stop near Lot E-4 on the Edinburg campus. The student refused Emergency Medical Services.

Oct. 16

12:10 p.m.: An officer was dispatched to the University Library on the Brownsville campus after a snake was reported inside the building. The snake was located and safely removed.

10:43 p.m.: An employee reported she struck a man on a scooter with her vehicle in Lot E-36 on the Edinburg campus. No injuries or damages were reported.

Oct. 17

7:11 p.m.: An officer responded to an off-campus residence for a welfare check after an employee from the Dean of Students received a concerning email. The graduate student wanted to spend a week in her studio office without leaving. She was determined not to be a danger to herself or others.

Oct. 18

12:03 a.m.: An officer detected the smell of electrical smoke in the Education Complex on the Edinburg campus and found smoke in an office. The Edinburg Fire Department determined the cause was an overheated refrigerator, disconnected it and cleared the building for re-entry.

2:30 p.m.: A student reported he lost his Mexican passport and visa in the Music, Science and Learning Center on the Brownsville campus the day before.

--Compiled by *Dayra Gonzalez*

35.8%
After 4 p.m.

7.1%
In the a.m.

57.1%
Noon to 4 p.m.

wacky web poll

What's the best time to attend classes? Let us know Your ideal time!

Do You like to study on campus or off-campus? Feel free to tell us Your favorite spots as well!

SCAN to answer!

STUDENTS

Continued from Page 1

"I never didn't work," Govea said. "That really forced me to learn how to prioritize what was important and learn communication skills you need when you get a job."

Dorian Vazquez, who has a master's degree in Spanish and translation interpreting, said finding his path took years. After earning a degree in civil engineering in 2004, Vazquez realized his passion lay elsewhere.

"I felt lost," he said. "I was selling mobile phones in Brownsville while living in Matamoros and crossing the bridge every morning. But I learned to focus on what I was good at — talking to people, translating, interpreting — and that changed everything."

Now, teaching in the Department of Writing and Language Studies, Vazquez tells his students that success does not come in a straight line.

"This is not a race; it's a marathon," he said. "People don't hire you because you're perfect. They hire you because, when you make a mistake, you know how to find a solution."

Bertha Lance, employer engagement coordinator for the Career Center, said concerns about employment

are common but can be managed with preparation and early involvement.

"Many students worry about not having enough experience," Lance said. "We recommend they start early, with internships, micro-credentials or by using our online resources."

Alumni also have access to Handshake and Vaquero Connect to network and find jobs.

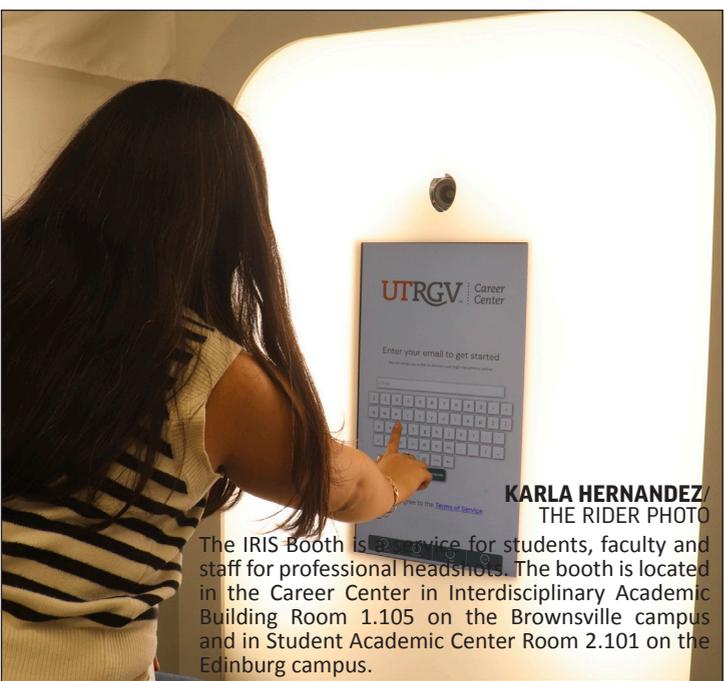
"There are opportunities out there," Lance said. "It's about staying connected and taking advantage of what's available. The earlier you start, the more prepared you'll be when you graduate."

America Martinez, a nursing senior, said the thought of entering the job market brings both excitement and fear.

"Honestly, the thought of graduating makes me feel a little bit anxious and nervous," Martinez said.

For her, it would be the first time seeking a field-related job and "not an on-campus job." She added she worries about limited visa options for international graduates.

"My biggest worry is having fewer chances of finding a job as a foreign student," Martinez said. "The Valley doesn't offer a lot of work visas, and that scares me."



KARLA HERNANDEZ
THE RIDER PHOTO

The IRIS Booth is a service for students, faculty and staff for professional headshots. The booth is located in the Career Center in Interdisciplinary Academic Building Room 1.105 on the Brownsville campus and in Student Academic Center Room 2.101 on the Edinburg campus.

VISA

Continued from Page 1

He explained basic economic principles suggest the policy will lead to fewer applications overall.

"As in the market for anything, if the price of any good goes up, the quantity demanded goes down," Lopez-Velasco said. "This increases the price dramatically, so we can expect less sponsorships. Some sectors will be much more affected than others."

The H-1B visa program allows U.S. employers to hire foreign workers in specialized fields such as technology, engineering and higher education. According to federal guidance, the new fee will apply to employers filing initial petitions for new workers.

Lopez-Velasco said the ripple effects could be wide-reaching, as companies that once relied on foreign talent may rethink their hiring strategies.

"High-skill immigration is correlated with patents, business creation and new

companies," he said. "If we lose top talent to other countries, we might end up with some undesirable effects both on the fiscal side and by losing potential job creators."

The White House said the policy is part of a strategy to expand opportunities for American workers, according to a Sept. 19 White House proclamation.

Lopez-Velasco said while that may be the intention, the outcome may not align with those goals.

"The intention from the administration seems to be to give more opportunities to natives," he said. "But sometimes the intention and the final outcome are not the same. If you restrict this too much, these new firms might not materialize."

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services and the White House have both released guidance on the change, encouraging employers to review their petition plans ahead of upcoming application cycles.



THE RIDER FILE PHOTOS

Abigail Pozulp (right) and Viviana Treviño, lecturers in the School of Integrated Biological and Chemical Sciences, look at the newly donated red blood cell model on Nov. 19, 2024. The model, created by biology senior Reese Nittler, will reside in the Anatomy and Physiology One lab on the Brownsville campus.

RESEARCH

Continued from Page 1

The Rider asked the senior vice president how the success of faculty and student researchers across different disciplines is recognized and supported.

"We went from writing 400 proposals a year to 670 proposals a year," Saygin replied. "Writing good proposals brings you more rewards, and the next challenge becomes spending the money that you receive."

He said collaboration between departments has helped reach this milestone.

"It's a full-team effort that made this happen ... and another group is the accounts payable," Saygin said. "We have several grants that we work with other universities, which means other universities are subawardees. That means we pay them. So expediting the payment to them shows expenditures on the UTRGV side."

Subhash Chauhan, professor of immunology and microbiology and director of the South Texas Center of Excellence in Cancer Research at the UTRGV School of Medicine, said the

achievement is a sign of how far the institution has come in just a decade.

"UTRGV is just a 10 years old institution," Chauhan said. "We are just celebrating the 10th anniversary. For that kind of a young institution, it's a really big milestone."

The director added the funding directly affects students by providing more reinforced programs and more opportunities.

"Since UTRGV is receiving this good amount of funding, it creates a lot of infrastructure and a lot of opportunities for students, undergraduate students or graduate students," he said. "... Bottom line is, it really matters a lot for our future generation."

Chauhan added research is a long-term investment.

"Research is not for the present, it's for the future generation to come," he said. "Whatever we are doing here, it is going to create a really good infrastructure for our future generation to come, and it will help them immensely a lot."

The funding helps support new doctoral programs across disciplines, adding onto why students can stay in the Rio

Grande Valley, according to Chauhan.

"So, the idea is like we like to keep our students here but, for that, we need to have infrastructure, and this funding obviously helps us to retain our people here," he said.

For students such as Vijay Radhakrishnan, a biology senior, the expansion in research opportunities has made a difference.

"I work as a student assistant, but I think it's really good," Radhakrishnan said. "It gives students an opportunity to get more experience in research and just kind of working with the teams. And everything is a really good experience."

As UTRGV continues progressing toward Carnegie R1 status, both administrators and students have a common goal: expanding opportunity while uplifting the region, according to Saygin.

"Trust yourself, trust the university, trust the administration, this is just the beginning, we are going to be doing so many other amazing things," the senior vice president said.



THE RIDER FILE PHOTOS

Shown is the UTHealth Houston: School of Public Health sign on the Brownsville campus. "The money is going toward graduate students, faculty time, equipment, laboratory methodologies and any infrastructure that's really geared towards achieving these research goals," said Can Saygin, senior vice president for Research and Dean of Graduate College.

COLUMN OF THE WEEK

I HATE HALLOWEEN



EMMA CASTILLO
REPORTER

for me, Halloween is simply the bane of my existence.

Commercialism is a part of our everyday lives, no matter the season, so you'd think I'd have gotten used to it by now. But nothing will be able to hide my face of disgust when I walk through Walmart and find pumpkins, skeletons and bats shoved in my face before October even begins. I don't understand how all of these symbols and dark, muted colors manage to put anybody into a fun celebratory mood because, personally, it doesn't even strike a joyful fear through me. It just weirds me out.

Other holidays have their charms, with cute hearts plastered everywhere for Valentine's Day or simple snowflakes sprinkled around for Christmas. But Halloween? You can't be subtle with it. Somehow skulls with party city wigs on your lawn become justifiable during this time. It's tacky.

One would assume, with the

flashiness of the holiday, its loyal celebrators would go the extra mile when it comes to the next best part: costumes. As someone with an appreciation for creativity, I can enjoy a good costume separate from the holiday. But I can't help having noticed that, over the years, people can't even be bothered to celebrate that part right. I'll see a picture, subtitled 'Mario and

Every year, it's proven the corporations forcing this holiday down our throats have more life than the people celebrating it.

Luigi costumes!', and shown will be two girls wearing green and red shirts. Where are the mustaches?! The hats?!

The props?! THE LIFE?!

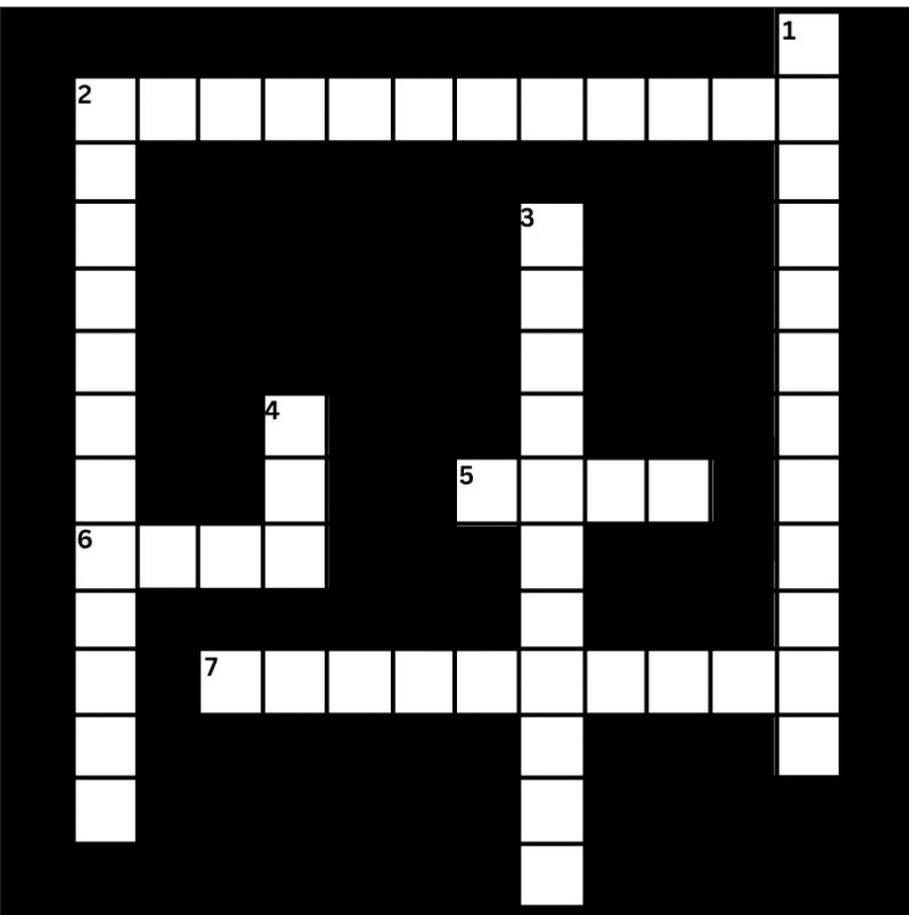
You have the opportunity, one chance out of the year to go crazy and look like a freak without people judging you, one single moment to feel a real sense of community over an outfit. And you dress yourself up like a JCPenney's mannequin? Every year, it's proven the corporations forcing this holiday down our throats have more life than the people celebrating it.

So, you've probably figured it out by now. The big reveal: I grew up Christian and was not allowed to celebrate "The devil's birthday." Do I still believe in and care for this rhetoric at all? No. Does most of my hate stem from the jealousy of never being able to celebrate with everyone? Most likely. Does my point still stand? Absolutely.

I hope you all have a lovely autumn ... and nothing else. I'll be bitterly waiting until Nov. 1 when all the candy goes on sale.

People always say you should never use the word "hate." "Hate's a strong word," they warn. Yet, I struggle to find any other word that truly captures how I feel about Halloween. Though it's often seen as the highlight of fall,

CROSSWORD



ACROSS

- 2. Name of the coffee shop located at El Comedor on the Brownsville campus
- 5. Name of the common area between the Student Union and the Interdisciplinary Engineering and Academic Building on the Edinburg campus
- 6. Acronym for the recreation center on campus
- 7. Name of the covered walking path that connects various buildings on the Edinburg campus

DOWN

- 1. Name of the residence halls for students on the Edinburg campus
- 2. Name of the campus hub for activities and dining on both campuses
- 3. Name of the place where students can get classroom materials, books, graduation regalia and UTRGV merch
- 4. Acronym of the building name that houses weight training, academic and sports medicine facilities for various UTRGV sports teams

EDITORIAL CARTOON



PHOTO GALLERY

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE SCARY MOVIE?

--Compiled and photos by Venisha Colón and Mykel Del Angel



Adrian Calderon
music technology sophomore

"My favorite scary movie is 'Smile 2.' I think the gore and the graphics on that movie were just out of this world. I had never seen anything like it, and I think more movies should look like that."



Claudia Quintana
music education sophomore

"It's not really scary, but my husband was scared of it when he was little. I love 'Coraline.' Yeah ... I grew up with it, and like all the Tim Burton movies. ... 'Coraline' just hits different."

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DONAR PARA AYUDAR A OTROS

SOFÍA CANTÚ SAUCEDA
THE RIDER

El Programa Nacional de Donantes de Médula Ósea, NMDP por sus siglas en inglés, organizó una campaña de registro la semana pasada en el campus de Edinburg para alentar a los estudiantes de UTRGV a unirse a la lista de donadores de médula ósea.

La campaña de registro en Brownsville se llevará a cabo de 10 a.m. a 4 p.m. el 3 y 4 de noviembre en el patio principal del Main Building.

Shelby Rios, coordinadora de reclutamiento de miembros para el programa, dijo que es una organización sin fines de lucro que apoya a pacientes con cáncer y trastornos sanguíneos a encontrar donadores de células madre.

“Hemos estado haciendo esto por más de 10 años en UTRGV”, Rios dijo. “Venimos cada semestre”.

Dijo que el propósito de venir a la universidad es por “disparidades de salud” en la comunidad hispana.

“Desafortunadamente, todas las minorías étnicas, incluyendo hispanos, tienen menos del 50% de posibilidades de encontrar un donador compatible”, Rios dijo.

Leticia Mondragon, gerente de cuentas para el sur y centro de Texas, dijo que la organización es la “última oportunidad de sobrevivir” para un paciente.

“Cada tres minutos, alguien es diagnosticado con cáncer de sangre potencialmente letal”, Mondragon dijo.

“Entonces, es muy importante que le demos esperanzas a nuestros pacientes con cáncer de sangre porque solo el 70% de ellos necesitan encontrar, para una segunda oportunidad en la vida, a

un donador sin parentesco”.

Dijo que NMDP quiere alentar a los estudiantes a donar porque pueden salvar una vida en la comunidad y alrededor del mundo.

“Amamos a los Vaqueros aquí en UTRGV”, Mondragon dijo. “Hemos tenido muchas campañas exitosas aquí y pienso que es una comunidad que quiere devolver [a la comunidad]”.

Dijo que las donaciones de médula ósea tienen muchos conceptos erróneos sobre el dolor.

“Pero, eso es menos del 10% [del proceso]”, Mondragon dijo. “Es muy similar a la donación doble de glóbulos rojos, plaquetas o plasma”.

Rios dijo que cuando las personas se registran, se agregan al registro nacional de NMDP y se quedan ahí hasta que son asignados con un paciente.

“Después, les preguntamos si quieren donar”, dijo. “[...] Tienen la oportunidad de decir sí o no. Si dicen que sí, hacen la donación, que puede ser la única oportunidad del paciente”.

Leslie Martinez, estudiante de último año de ciencias biomédicas y presidente del capítulo de NMDP en UTRGV, dijo que fue motivada a donar después de hablar con Ríos.

“Potencialmente puedo ayudar [...] a pacientes con cáncer, trastornos sanguíneos y leucemia, lo que me sorprendió porque lo que siempre escucho de [procedimientos] para el cáncer [...] son quimioterapias”, Martinez dijo.

Dijo que se registró para las donaciones de médula ósea en una campaña de registro en campus y “desde ese día ha cambiado mi vida”.

Martinez agregó que entiende por



Shelby Rios (de izquierda), coordinadora de reclutamiento de miembros para el Programa Nacional de Donantes de Médula Ósea, ayuda a Ashley Cruz, una estudiante de primer año, y a Magdiel Villa, un estudiante de primer año de ciencias de la salud integrada, a registrarse para volverse donadores el 20 de octubre en el Student Union del campus de Edinburg.

“Desde ese día ha cambiado mi vida”.

—Leslie Martinez, estudiante de último año de ciencias biomédicas y presidente del capítulo de NMDP

que las personas “dudan” de registrarse porque no es algo de lo que muchas personas saben.

“Denle una oportunidad porque nunca sabes”, dijo. “[...] Esos que se registran pueden potencialmente salvar a otros”.



Magdiel Villa, estudiante de primer año de ciencias de la salud integrada, toma una muestra durante el evento de registro del Programa Nacional de Donantes de Médula Ósea el 20 de octubre en el Student Union del campus de Edinburg.

VALLEY SPOTLIGHT

MICHELLE Y DANNY QUIROZ: DE COFFEE LOVERS A COFFEE OWNERS

SOFÍA CANTÚ SAUCEDA
THE RIDER

Ambos nativos del Valle del Río Grande, Michelle y Danny Quiroz no solo son socios de negocios si no compañeros de vida.

Danny Quiroz, socio director de Reserva Coffee Roasters, supervisa la calidad del café y que esté a la perfección.

Michelle Quiroz, socio gerente de Reserva Coffee Roasters en McAllen, se encarga de supervisar las operaciones de las distintas ubicaciones del café e impulsar el crecimiento de la organización.

“Fuimos a UTRGV y ahí obtuvimos nuestras licenciaturas”, Michelle Quiroz dijo.

Compartió que los dos trabajaron en corporaciones por más de 12 años antes de abrir su primera ubicación en 2017, ubicada en 3400 W. Expressway 83 en McAllen.

“Creo que a mediados del 2010, teníamos nuestra propia máquina de espresso en casa y siempre antes de ir al trabajo hacíamos nuestro propio café”, Michelle Quiroz dijo. “Naturalmente nos sentimos atraídos a preparar nuestro propio café”.

Dijo que todo el menú y el concepto del negocio se creó cuando todavía estaban trabajando en corporaciones, “después de horas [...] en nuestra cocina, después de hacer tarea y después de cenar”.

“Fue una rutina diaria durante [...] unos nueve meses más o menos”, Michelle Quiroz dijo.

Dijo que trabajar en una corporación

antes de tener algo propio los “ayudó mucho”.

“Fue una muy buena experiencia”, Michelle Quiroz dijo. “No creo que hubiéramos tenido éxito si nos hubiéramos adentrado al negocio del café primero”.

Compartió que el mayor éxito fue cuando abrieron su compañía tostadora de café.

“Antes de eso, cuando empezamos a tostar café, lo hacíamos en el garaje de nuestra casa”, Michelle Quiroz dijo. “Después nos movimos [...] para acomodar el crecimiento”.

También dijo que son fanáticos de la forma en que su café es tostado porque todo lo hacen en McAllen.

Michelle Quiroz dijo que cuando comenzaron a crear el concepto de Reserva notaron un espacio en el mercado del tostado de café.

“Al principio solo nos concentrábamos en tostar nuestro propio café y venderlo en mercados de agricultores, tiendas y cosas así”, dijo.

Cuando las personas compraban su café, muchos preguntaban si tenían una cafetería, Michelle Quiroz dijo.

“No pensábamos en eso a ese punto”, dijo. “Con mucha motivación de nuestros clientes buscamos la financiación para abrir nuestra primera cafetería”.

Ahora, Reserva Coffee Roasters tiene cuatro ubicaciones, tres en McAllen y una en la Escuela de Medicina de UTRGV en el campus de Edinburg.

“Estamos abriendo una quinta sucursal, y está previsto que abra a finales de este año en Edinburg”, Michelle Quiroz dijo.

Uno de los consejos que dio es “tener el financiamiento adecuado y una estrategia para ser rentable”.

“Tiene que haber un plan y un propósito muy definidos”, dijo. “[...] Hay mucho que implica que puede no ser evidente”.



Se muestra Reserva Coffee Roasters, ubicado en el Team Base Learning Center de la Escuela de Medicina en el campus de Edinburg.



DRAYA RIOS/THE RIDER PHOTOS



FOTOS CORTESÍA MICHELLE QUIROZ
Michelle Quiroz (izquierda) y Danny Quiroz, dueños de Reserva Coffee Roasters en McAllen.

IF WALLS COULD TALK

EDUARDO ESCAMILLA
A&E EDITOR

What if a past event was so traumatic that its memory haunts the present? One of the oldest standing buildings in Edinburg may be experiencing that phenomenon. It has a grim history some believe has never left its walls.

In an interview with The Rider, Jenarae Bautista, curator of exhibits and collections at the Museum of South Texas History, shared its inception as a former Hidalgo County Jail to its renovation as a museum and the haunted folklore it inherited.

The 1909-1910 structure was initially built alongside the county courthouse and served multiple roles, including jail, city hall and a police station, before becoming a museum in 1970, according to Bautista.

Today, its stark past fuels the popular local folklore that the building is haunted, with museum staff and visitors reporting experiences with its spectral residents, according to the curator. Perhaps the most chilling artifact in the museum is the replica gallows and noose, a visual reminder of the one confirmed execution that took place in 1913.

The man hanged was Abraham Ortiz, found guilty of murder and assault.

Bautista recounted the tragic nature of the event, including Ortiz's final, poignant words in

Spanish: "There is no heaven and there is no hell."

She said the execution was meant to be a terrifying public spectacle.

"We have written accounts of locals who just said, like, you could hear it," Bautista said. "You could hear the thud. You could hear the clang."

The curator added some townspeople, unwilling to be a part of it, took their children and left the city before the execution occurred.

Visitors can still hear a sound effect of the trap door opening when they visit the execution area, according to the curator.

The solitary cell, where Ortiz was held before his execution, is also available for the public to visit and to experience the space with the large original metal door barricading them in.

Another death occurred in the solitary cell when brothers Jose and Bartolo Lopez were set to be executed in 1910, but Bartolo committed suicide inside the day before the execution.

Bautista added those who enter the solitary cell sometimes "feel a little bit of a presence" or "something on your chest," suggesting he may also be present.

She said the most frequently reported spirit is of Nemesio Cortina, the first jailer, who lived on the first floor of the jail with his wife, Marcella.

Though he did not die within the jail walls, he died in 1916 as a result

of injuries sustained after a fall down the jail's stairs.

"I'm now convinced that his spirit kind of hangs out and says, 'Hello' once in a while, if you will," Bautista said.

She said she heard a disembodied male voice call out, "Staying late?" A personal experience of working after hours, which she described as the presence of an "older man ... kind of like a señor."

Bautista added the experience "never feels malicious."

Although not everyone believes, reports of strange occurrences are not uncommon, she said.

The curator said staff members who have offices in the building report hearing paper rustling and phantom knocking on their doors.

Police officers who patrol the area at night have reported seeing a "glimmer" or "light" near the second-floor hanging room area, according to Bautista.

She said she rationalizes the paranormal with a spiritual approach, saying she enters the building with a friendly "Hello" and tells the spirits she is there to tell their story.

"I'm not terrified," Bautista said. "I'm not afraid to go into the building. I'm not afraid to do my job there because it's just about respect."

To visit the 1910 Old Jail or learn more about the museum, visit MOSThistory.org.



Pictured at the Museum of South Texas History is the exterior of what was the first jailhouse of Hidalgo County. The jailhouse hosted an execution for Abraham Ortiz, convicted of murder and assault.

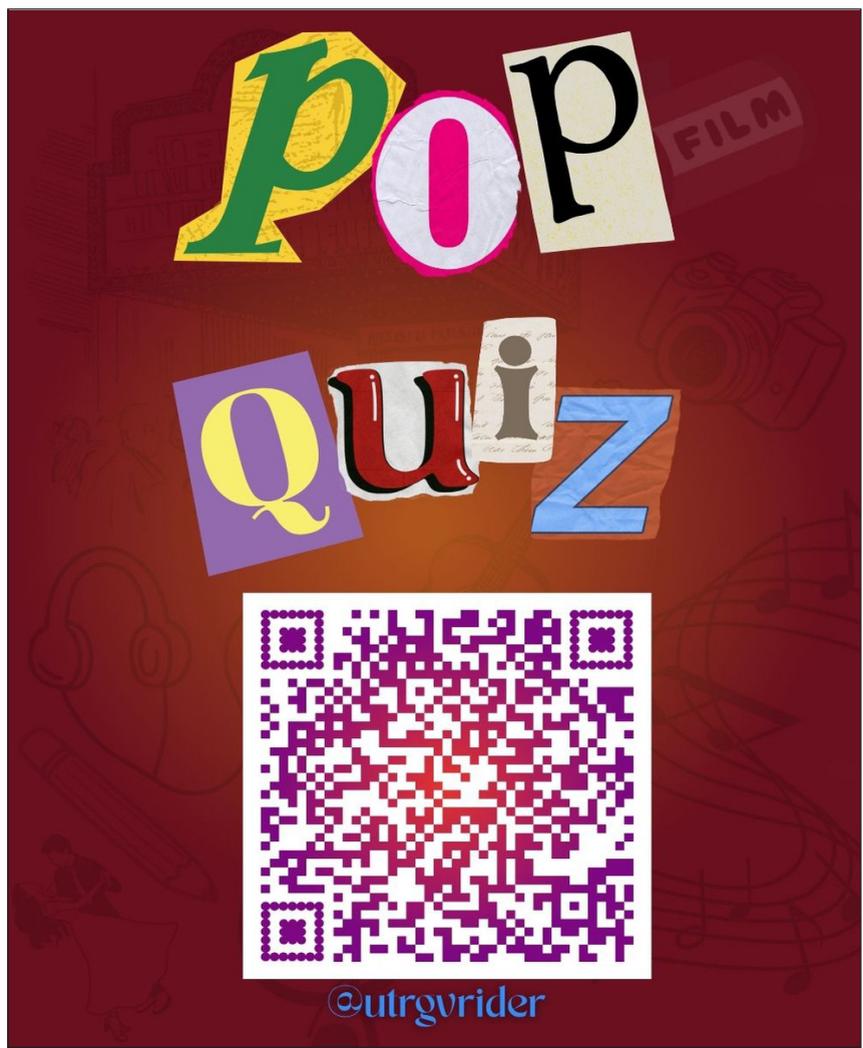


Shown is a replica noose of the one used to hang Abraham Ortiz who was convicted of murder and assault in 1912. Ortiz was the only person to be executed in what is now the Museum of South Texas History in Edinburg.



Shown is the jail house office room at the Museum of South Texas History in Edinburg, where all the prisoners were brought in to be processed.

CORRECTION: In the Oct. 20 issue "Ghosts, bigfoot and UFO's: OH, my!" incorrectly identified an associate professor. The professors name is Randall Monty.



TENNIS TO CLOSE OUT SEASON



PHOTOS COURTESY UTRGV ATHLETICS

Senior Yaiza Vazquez makes a hit during a 6-1 winning match against Lamar University April 5 in the Orville I. Cox Tennis Center on the Edinburg campus. Vazquez competed in the singles draw at the Southland Conference Fall Championship, where she faced Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi. As of press time, results were unavailable.

DANIELA CHAPA-REYES
THE RIDER

The short, fall season for UTRGV Women's Tennis is coming to an end, having wrapped up five out of six tournaments this semester.

Head coach West Nott said the girls have worked hard this fall.

"We've really ramped up the fitness of the team," Nott said. "We have a lot of returners, so they kind of know the landscape of how we do things. There have been some positive results in the tournaments, but we've also been playing some pretty stiff competition."

The team competed in the Southland Conference Fall Championship in Natchitoches, Louisiana, Thursday through Saturday. As of press time Friday, results were unavailable.

"This is an individual tournament where the top player from each team plays against the top player from the other teams in the conference," Nott said. "We drew [Texas A&M University]-Corpus Christi in the first round of singles and doubles. That's the [team] we got to get through to perform well in the conference. I feel like it's going to be a tough match."

Sophomore Mariia Bakhtina and junior Rhea Makesar competed in the doubles draw during the SLC Fall Championship. Makesar said they have been training hard for the remaining matches.

"We played a lot more together now in practice, which we hadn't done at the start," she said. "I think that connection is back, and I'm really hungry for the Southland Conference. ... I think that will help."

During the Intercollegiate Tennis Association Texas Regional Championship in Fort Worth, Bakhtina and



Sophomore Mariia Bakhtina celebrates during a match against Lamar University April 5 in the Orville Cox i. Tennis Center on the Edinburg campus.

Makesar fell on the second day of the tournament 8-4 up against Rice University. The duo fell again to Rice on the final day of the tournament 8-3 during the consolation draw. Bakhtina said it was still a good score.

"We tried to play the same," she said. "We tried to beat them, but they were better that day. We work hard, and we try to do everything."

Makesar said her playing style is aggressive.

"If I can overpower them, I will," she said. "Otherwise, you just have to adapt. I kinda just go into it, setting up the point so high, deep balls get it on the back fence. And I can play my own game and just try to be as solid as possible."

Senior Yaiza Vazquez competed in the singles draw for the SLC Fall Championship. Vazquez's last tournament was at the Rice University Invitational in September, where she was defeated 6-4, 6-2. She said she was injured after that match.

"It was just recovery and come back as soon as possible and as healthy as possible," Vazquez said. "Sometimes, it is not a 100%, but I make as much as I can with what I have."

The team will next compete Nov. 6 through 9 at the Baylor University Invitational in Waco. Visit goutrgv.com for more information.

SPORTS COLUMN

The Wemby Era has arrived



ALI HALLOUM
THE RIDER

It's here. He has arrived. And it won't be long before it is his league.

Victor Wembanyama, the all-star big man who the San Antonio Spurs have selected at number one overall in 2022, made an emphatic mark to open the 2025 season for his squad.

On a night that was hyped up to mark the NBA Debut of this year's number one overall pick in Cooper Flag, Wemby stole the show with a 40-point, 15-rebound and 3 block night on 30 minutes, leading the Spurs to a 125-92 rout over the Dallas Mavericks.

It was highlight after highlight, as Wemby was making 6'10" center Anthony Davis look like a shorter guard, as if to give the 13-year vet a "welcome to the NBA" moment. He was having his way and making his own path against that Mavs defense.

And it wasn't like it was all Wemby last night either. Devin Vassell and 2024-25 Rookie of the Year Stephon Castle looked incredible, and No. 2 overall pick Dylan Harper scored 15 off the

bench.

His offseason was certainly a journey, from living with Shaolin monks in China to training alongside Kevin Garnett and Hakeem Olajuwon (not to mention having Tim Duncan and Coach Pop on speed dial). And we are certainly seeing the results of that.

A 7'3" freak of nature, who quickly established himself as the league's best defenders, who moves in a way that a 7'3" frame never should, with a guard's handles and can drain threes from the logo, got so much better.

His post presence was noticeably stronger than last year. He got stronger, bullying defenders out of the way all night. Not to mention he has added the Dream shake to his bag.

There are simply no more words to describe Victor Wembanyama that have not already been said in NBA circles. With a strong San Antonio team at the helm, he is poised to make an impact and shoot for a title.

We as a collective of basketball fans, insiders and media alike need to recognize one thing and one thing only, its Wembanyama time now. He is gunning for GOAT status against the likes of LeBron and Jordan.

All I can say is buy the Wemby GOAT stock now, because it will not be long before he enters that conversation.



ATHLETE OF THE WEEK

JAYLEN WASHINGTON



PHOTO COURTESY UTRGV ATHLETICS

Jaylen Washinton is a finance sophomore from Dallas and a gaurd for the UTRGV Men's Basketball Team.

Jaylen Washington is a finance sophomore from Dallas and a guard for the UTRGV Men's Basketball Team. During his first season, he played in 22 games and averaged 2.8 points per game.

Q: What is a fun fact about yourself?

A: "I love to binge watch shows."

Q: Who or what got you started in basketball?

A: "My father, for sure. He had a big impact and played a big role. He just has a love for the game."

Q: What's made you continue basketball?

A: "My love for it and also my family."

Q: Who has been your

biggest inspiration or role model?

A: "My little siblings. I have a little sister and ... a little brother."

Q: Who is your favorite basketball player?

A: "I would say Kyrie Irving."

Q: How do you mentally prepare for a game?

A: "I call my family first, get the good luck from them. Then, I just lock in with music."

Q: What kind of music do you listen to?

A: "All different types ... YoungBoy, Billie Eilish, Lil Baby, just a bunch of people. My favorite song right now would be 'Room Comfort' by Rylo and Durk."

Q: Which shows or movies do you like to watch?

A: "Right now, I'm watching 'Snowfall,' and I just finished 'Stranger Things.'"

Q: Do you have any hobbies?

A: "Outside of basketball, no, not really."

Q: What do you like most about UTRGV?

A: "The connectivity. I would say the family vibe that I get from it. I definitely feel like it's a little community. It shows a lot of love and a lot of support."

Q: What are your biggest goals?

A: "To win a Southland [Conference] championship."

--Compiled by Mariajose Garza

HIDALGO COUNTY TO EXPAND COOPERATION WITH ICE

ETHAN MALDONADO
THE RIDER

The Hidalgo County Sheriff's Office is preparing to comply with a new state law that requires large counties to partner with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, formalizing cooperation between local and federal agencies on immigration enforcement.

Under Texas Senate Bill 8, signed into law June 20, sheriffs in counties with populations of 100,000 or more must enter into 287(g) or similar agreements with ICE.

Section 287(g) of the Immigration and Nationality Act allows ICE to partner with state and local law enforcement agencies. The goal of the program, according to the ICE website, is to enhance cooperation.

The law takes effect Jan. 1, 2026, and is part of the state's effort to expand immigration enforcement at the local level, according to the bill.

Raul Gonzalez, Hidalgo County public information officer, said the department already allows ICE to perform its duties inside the county jail and does not expect the new law to change operations or staffing.

Gonzalez said the Sheriff's Office does not directly enforce immigration

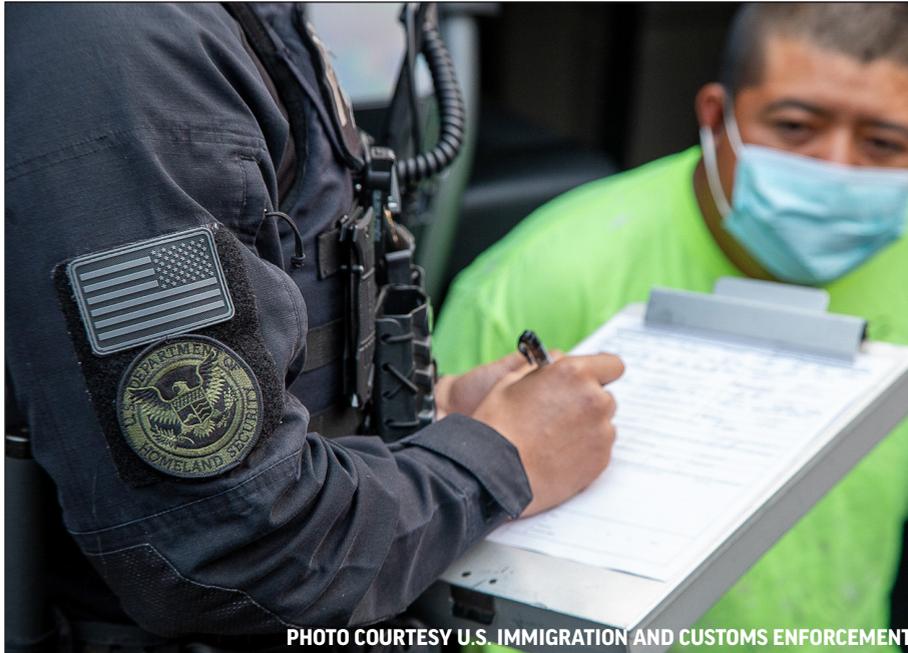


PHOTO COURTESY U.S. IMMIGRATION AND CUSTOMS ENFORCEMENT

Section 287(g) will take effect on Jan. 1 2026. "We continue to operate as normal," said Raul Gonzalez, Hidalgo County public information officer, when asked if there were going to be any noticeable changes.

laws but has agreements in place with the federal agency.

"We allow ICE to perform their duties and responsibilities in accordance with mandated requirements," he said. "There's no impact on the community. We continue to operate as normal and ensure a safe environment."

According to the ICE website, the Warrant Service Officer program allows the agency to train, certify and authorize local law enforcement officers to serve and execute administrative warrants on individuals in their custody.

The American Civil Liberties Union

of Texas has previously raised concerns about the use of detainers and 287(g) agreements, saying they can erode trust between immigrant communities and local law enforcement.

In a Sept. 10 ACLU statement posted on its website, the organization said partnerships like these "increase the risk of wrongful detentions and make immigrant communities less likely to report crimes or cooperate with local law enforcement."

SB 8 requires sheriffs to maintain these agreements once in place.

The Texas Attorney General's Office can take legal action against sheriffs who fail to comply, according to the bill.

The law's implementation date is less than two months away, and Gonzalez said the Sheriff's Office has not set an internal timeline.

"Right now, we continue to operate as we have," he said.

More than 70 law enforcement agencies nationwide participate in the 287(g) program, according to the ICE website.

Hidalgo County joins other similarly-sized Texas counties, such as Tarrant, Colin and Galveston in preparing to comply with SB 8 ahead of its 2026 deadline.

BACHELOR OF ARTS IN HUMAN DIMENSIONS OF ORGANIZATIONS

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