

CLUB SPOTLIGHT

LATINO THEATRE INITIATIVES

EMMA CASTILLO
THE RIDER



FULL STORY ON OUR WEBSITE

LOCAL

CANDIDATES DISCUSS CITY ISSUES



ETHAN MALDONADO
THE RIDER

Affordable housing, government transparency and regional growth were among the main topics as three candidates for Edinburg mayor faced off Tuesday night at a public forum hosted by Futuro RGV, a nonpartisan civic group.

Former city councilman Johnny Garcia, political newcomer Jonathan Salinas and former city attorney Omar Ochoa participated in the 90-minute event at the Edinburg Municipal Auditorium.

In an interview with The Rider Wednesday, former mayor Richard Molina said he did not attend due to a prior commitment but plans to take part in future forums.

READ MORE ON OUR WEBSITE

BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

IT IS NEVER TOO EARLY

MARIAH ESCOBAR
THE RIDER



FULL STORY ON OUR WEBSITE

A STEP AHEAD IN YOUR CAREER



KARLA HERNANDEZ/THE RIDER

UTRGV has more than 100 minors for the 2025-26 academic catalog such as Fine Arts, Liberal Arts, Business and Entrepreneurship, Education, Health Affairs, Engineering and Computer Science.

DAYRA GONZALEZ
THE RIDER

UTRGV offers more than 100 academic minors in its 2025-26 catalog, providing students opportunities to expand their studies beyond their majors. Yet many students remain unaware of the range of programs, which university officials say can boost career prospects and enrich the college experience.

Peter-James Ehimika, director of Student Success Initiatives, said minors are more than an add-on: they can help students stand out in competitive fields.

Ehimika said while students usually put time into selecting a major, they do not always consider how a minor might strengthen their resume or complement future goals.

“Maybe two people graduate with the same degree from the same university,” he said. “It could be their minor that sets them apart.”

The director added some minors are tied closely to certain majors. At the same time, UTRGV has minors that are not as well known, such as hospitality and tourism management, jazz studies, legal studies and music technology. Programs such as Spanish for healthcare, he added, can also prepare students for local careers.

Ehimika said the list of minors has grown significantly in recent years as the university adapts to new demands. The university regularly updates

programs during its curriculum cycle, and the growth of both majors and minors reflects efforts to stay current with 21st-century education.

One example of a program that answers to local needs is the Spanish Translation and Interpreting minor, according to Gabriel González Núñez, associate professor of Translation and director of Translation and Interpreting Programs.

González Núñez said it gives bilingual students the chance to refine

“Speak with an adviser, if you can, in person.”

--Aaliyah Gonzales-Zepeda, lead academic advisor

their Spanish and English skills for professional use and requires 18 credit hours.

He said many students do not realize translation requires formal training, since the assumption is often “anyone bilingual can do it.” And, employers, however, value a credential that shows a graduate has studied the field.

González Núñez said the program fits well with majors in health, criminal justice and government, where translation and interpreting are often in demand.

He added completing the program also qualifies students for the B3

Scholar Seal, which recognizes bilingual and bicultural achievement.

Deciding on a minor, however, goes beyond simply choosing an interest. Academic advisers play a role in guiding students through requirements and helping them understand how a minor can fit into their degree plan, according to Aaliyah Gonzales-Zepeda, lead academic advisor on the Brownsville campus.

She said advisers encourage students to choose minors that align with their goals, strengths and long-term plans rather than add one “just for the sake of it.”

She said adding a minor can sometimes extend graduation, but believes the benefits are worth it. The academic adviser added whether it is developing new skills, preparing for graduate school or simply pursuing a passion, she tells students to see a minor as an investment in themselves.

“I would always say speak with an adviser, if you can, in person, ... and you get to cultivate the relationship to feel comfortable enough to speak with your adviser,” she said. “... In our friend groups and ... classes sometimes the information we get it’s kind of, like, telephone.”

Gonzales-Zepeda added over time students might come with “half-truths” and it is the adviser’s job to make students feel secured, informed and empowered.

For more information, visit the Academic Advising Center website.

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Inclusion takes the court

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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.

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
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SOCIAL MEDIA EDITOR
Venisha Colón

ONLINE EDITOR
Mykel Del Angel

COPY EDITORS
Carlos Castañeda
Narda Serna
Pete Mendoza

REPORTERS
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A&E EDITOR
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SPORTS REPORTERS
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Daniela Chapa-Reyes

PHOTOGRAPHERS
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Karla Hernandez
Valeria Tokun Haga
Aarykah Navarro

MARKETING SPECIALISTS
Yazmin Castro Adame
Jocelyn Garcia Serna
Leslie Benavides

FACULTY ADVISER
Michelle Escajeda

STUDENT MEDIA PROGRAM COORDINATOR
Jesus Sanchez

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANTS
Ana Sanchez
Maggie Castillo

CONTACT:
EDINBURG CAMPUS
1201 West University Dr.
ELABS 170
Phone: (956) 665-5085

BROWNSVILLE CAMPUS
1 West University Blvd.
Student Union 2.16
Phone: (956) 882-5143
Fax: (956) 882-5176

Email:
TheRider@utrgv.edu
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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.

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.

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 Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday in the Student Academic Center on the Edinburg campus.

LIVING WATER LEMONADE

The Baptist Student Ministry will host Living Water Lemonade from 3 to 4 p.m. outside the Student Union on the Edinburg campus. Attendees can enjoy a **free lemonade** while discussing the true living water.

LSAT CRUSHERS CLASS

The Coffee Club will host a **free LSAT class** from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. in Education Complex Room 1.404 on the Edinburg campus. Attendees can learn **strategies** and

methods on how to take the LSAT.

Tuesday

LUCHA

La Unión Chicana de Hijxs de Aztlán will meet from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. in Education Complex Room 1.504 on the Edinburg campus. **Free food** and **drinks** will be provided.

BIBLE STUDY

Christians at RGV will host Bible Study from 12:15 to 1:45 p.m. in Student Academic Center Room 1.101 on the Edinburg campus and at the same time Wednesday in Education Complex Room 1.502 on the Edinburg campus.

COLLEGIATE ENTREPRENEURS

Collegiate Entrepreneurs' Organization will meet from 5 to 6 p.m. in Mathematics & General Classrooms Building Room 1.320 on the Edinburg campus. Attendees can have a chance to **network, share ideas** and **connect** with like-minded peers. **Free food** and **free stuff** will be provided.

RUN CLUB MEETING

Club Running-Vaquero Runners will host a club running 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**.

Wednesday

SPANISH CLUB

Spanish Club will meet from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. in the University Center on the Edinburg campus. **Free food** will be provided.

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**.

GEOLOGY CLUB

Geology Club will meet from 2 to 3 p.m. in Engineering Building Room 1.250 on the Edinburg campus. **Free food** will be provided.

FRIENDSHIP BRACELETS

Baptist Student Ministry will host a Friendship Bracelets event from 3:15 to 4:15 p.m. in the Health Affairs Building West gazebo on the Edinburg campus.

Thursday

IMA MEETING

The Association of Accountants and Financial Professionals in Business will meet with

a guest speaker from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. in Math and General Classrooms Building Room 2.416 on the Edinburg campus. Attendees can enjoy **free food**.

ACJA MEETING

The American Criminal Justice Association Sigma Kappa Chi will meet from 3 to 5 p.m. in Music Science & Learning Center Room 1.105 on the Brownsville campus.

Friday

IEEE ESB- GENERAL MEETING

The Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers will meet from 4 to 6 p.m. in Engineering Building Room 1.268 on the Edinburg campus. Attendees can discuss **upcoming events, workshops** and **fundraisers**.

SPECIAL OLYMPICS TEXAS RGV AREA ONE VOLLEYBALL TOURNAMENT

The Special Olympics Inclusion College Club and **Special Olympics Texas** will host the Special Olympics Texas RGV Area One Volleyball Tournament from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. in Health & Physical Education II Gym 118 on the Edinburg campus.

--Compiled by Narda Serna



POLICE REPORTS

The following are among the incidents reported to University Police between Sept. 22 and 27.

Sept. 22

9:47 a.m.: A student reported a vehicle hit another car while parking and left the area in Lot E-37 on the Edinburg campus.

11:52 a.m.: Officers responded to a student having a seizure in the Interdisciplinary Academic Building on the Brownsville campus. Emergency Medical Services transported the student to a hospital for further evaluation.

12:27 p.m.: A student reported his wallet was stolen from his backpack at the University Recreation on the Edinburg campus.

Sept. 23

4:58 p.m.: A suspicious

package containing a letter and USB drive was delivered to the University Financial Services building on the Edinburg campus. The case is under investigation.

Sept. 24

11:29 a.m.: Employees reported a cash shortage during a deposit at the Bursar Office on the Brownsville campus.

3:40 p.m.: An employee reported a Texas Southmost College security officer was rude to her while she unloaded equipment on Ringgold Road in Brownsville. The incident was reported to the TSC security supervisor.

5:38 p.m.: An officer responded to a man smoking in the Emilia Schunior Ramirez Hall on the Edinburg campus. It was later tested

positive for marijuana. The case is under investigation.

Sept. 25

2:33 p.m.: An officer helped a student unlock their car on Lot E-16 on the Edinburg campus. The student later realized they had lost their keys.

7:41 p.m.: A parent reported not hearing from her daughter, a student living at Casa Bella on the Brownsville campus, since May. Police contacted the student, who was fine, and later called her mother.

Sept. 26

8:31 a.m.: An employee reported being hit by a golf cart driven by another employee at the loading dock in the Academic Support Facility on the Edinburg campus. The employee felt pain but declined emergency medical care.

4:28 p.m.: Officers responded to a suspicious woman in the International Trade and Technology Building on the Edinburg campus. She was identified as a former employee and issued a criminal trespass warning from all UTRGV property.

Sept. 27

10:17 p.m.: A student reported loud banging noises in the hallway of Heritage Hall on the Edinburg campus. Officers found no cause.

10:23 p.m.: An officer responded to a report of a former student refusing to return a dorm key at The Village apartments on the Edinburg campus. The student agreed to return it after being contacted.

--Compiled by Dayra Gonzalez

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UNIFIED TO PLAY

MARIAH ESCOBAR
THE RIDER

The UTRGV Special Olympics Inclusion College Club and Special Olympics Texas will host the Special Olympics Texas RGV Area One Volleyball Tournament, with about five groups coming together to compete.

The tournament will take place from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. Friday in Health & Physical Education II Gym 218 on the Edinburg campus.

The club is sponsoring the tournament as the organization “works closely together with Special Olympics Texas ... here in the [Rio Grande] Valley,” said Maria Trinidad, club adviser and lecturer for the Department of Health and Human Performance.

She said Special Olympics Texas has been around for over 57 years and the Special Olympics Inclusion College Club has been working on campus for over 10 years.

“We promote inclusion, getting everybody together and being like one

big family,” Trinidad said.

The goal of the organization is to serve individuals with intellectual disabilities to build a community and help them stay active by engaging in sports all year round, according to the Special Olympics Texas website.

“We serve all [disabilities] meaning

“...one big family.”

--Maria Trinidad, Special Olympics Inclusion College Club adviser

their special needs ... but we focus all across like children and adults,” Trinidad said.

Students practice different sports all year round as they can train for volleyball one day and a different sport the next day, according to Fernando Mora, an exercise science senior.

Trinidad said the club decides the sport athletes will compete in from a total of 14 adaptive sports.

She added this fall season the

tournament will consist of both traditional and unified teams.

“The difference between a traditional team is that they are all student athletes with disabilities,” Trinidad said. “A unified team will have college students that are unified partners paired up with our individuals with disabilities playing in the teams.”

She said there will be three UTRGV students and three athletes competing in a unified team.

“[There will be] nine or 10 teams competing against each other because we have both traditional and unified teams,” Trinidad said.

Mora said the game is structured as a regular volleyball game and is accommodated to those who may need it.

“If a team is maybe full of people with hearing impairments ... they’ll adjust it so, if someone is with a team that has more physical disabilities it’ll be adjusted ... so it’s different depending on teams,” he said.

For more information, visit V Link or UTRGV’s Engagement Zone website.

PHOTO GALLERY

HOMEGOWN HERBS

AN ON-CAMPUS FARMER’S MARKET



DRAYA RIOS/THE RIDER PHOTOS

The Environmental Awareness Club hosted Mini Farmer’s Market Monday in front of the Interdisciplinary Engineering & Academic Building on the Edinburg campus.



Noah Aguilar (left), an exercise science sophomore, purchases vegetables from the Mini Farmer’s Market Monday in front of the Interdisciplinary Engineering & Academic Building on the Edinburg campus. The event was hosted by the Environmental Awareness Club.

STUDENT CLINIC AIDS VAQUEROS

SOPHIA CORTEZ
THE RIDER

The UT Health RGV Student Health clinics provide free medical services for students on both the Brownsville and Edinburg campuses, offering professional care to support their health and well-being.

The Edinburg clinic is in the Student Health Center, while the Brownsville clinic relocated to the Research Office Building.

Amaro Salinas, assistant director for Health Services, said the clinic functions similar to a regular doctor’s office with the key difference being it is designed solely for students.

“The difference there is that the students make their own appointments,” Salinas said. “We also help and guide [students] through the health care world.”

All-enrolled students have access to the services, and the cost of appointments is already included in their student fees. Faculty and staff receive care from a separate employee health division in Edinburg.

Students can access services by calling ahead to schedule an appointment or by walking in if space is available. Nurse visits are also available for students who are

unclear if they should see a provider. Salinas said another priority is confidentiality.

“It’s very important that they know

“We also help and guide [students] through the health care world.”

--Amaro Salinas, assistant director for Health Services

all the information is confidential, it cannot be shared,” he said.

The assistant director said the clinics also work with local hospitals and specialists to ensure students receive the care they require.

“Our staff will set up the appointment for the students,” Salinas said. “We try for the student not to leave our clinic before we can get the appointment, that way, they take that information with them as well.”

He added grant funding allows qualified students to receive contraceptive implants and IUDs for free.

Student Health Services also offers specialized women’s wellness care.



MARIAJOSE GARZA/THE RIDER

UT Health RGV Student Health is located in the Research Office Building on the Brownsville campus and in the Student Health Center on the Edinburg campus. It is open from 8 a.m. to noon and 1 to 5 p.m. Monday to Friday.

Amanda Rodriguez, a family nurse practitioner, explained the services available for women in the clinic such as pap smears, breast exams, and sexually transmitted infection testing and prevention.

“We can go through menstrual cycles, irregular cycles and heavy bleeding,” Rodriguez said. “We also offer a full range of birth control, hormonal birth control, long-acting birth control at the clinic.”

The nurse practitioner said all

women enrolled get coverage for reversible contraceptives and IUDs, even if they do not have medical insurance.

Women who do not have medical insurance have the option to opt for a grant that can cover the use of these services, according to Rodriguez.

She also highlighted the preventative care recommended for women’s wellness.

“I think it’s really important for

COLUMN OF THE WEEK

LET THE GAMES BEGIN



DAYRA GONZALEZ
REPORTER

It's October now, and with that, so many things are approaching. How am I supposed to handle it all? Fall season,

autumn vibes, pumpkin spice on one side, MLB post season, midterms, group projects, "The Life of a Showgirl" release and work on the other.

Since the semester began, my mind has not been at peace at all. I am still getting used to balancing my routine: school and work. And adding to that, this semester I also started with my program's classes so it has all been a process for me. But I never said I didn't like it, actually I have gained experience handling the situation, and right now, I am looking forward to the best months of the year starting now.

Every year, for as long as I can remember, it has been the same: I wait for my favorite team to reach the World Series in October. Lucky for me, the Los Angeles Dodgers show up often.

I really enjoy watching baseball, I

have never been much into sports, but baseball is the exception. I grew up in a family of baseball players who made me like the sport. To be honest, I don't watch regular season games because, boring, but there's just something about postseason.

Why the Dodgers? I guess I just followed my family's favorite team and decided to stick with it. I am glad because I had the chance to attend one of their games in Monterrey, Mexico, during the Mexico Series 2018 vs the San Diego Padres.

I still dream of the day when I go to a game in Los Angeles, at their home. I am sure it will happen soon. As of now, I will keep an eye on these next games before this year's World Series.

Autumn is not really autumn without leaves falling down like pieces into

place, the perfect season for my 24/7 music obsession. I love listening to Taylor Swift and I feel like this season will be different. I could not just not talk about it, the release of her brand new album is driving me crazy, I am so excited.

I had the opportunity to attend The

"Lucky for me, the Los Angeles Dodgers show up often."

Eras Tour and have never been the same since. I am looking forward to the next tour.

This month may be chaotic, but it will be interesting after all. I would not have it any other way. I am so ready.

WACKYWEB POLL

wacky web poll

Yup, absolutely 50%

Would You Judge someone by the way they look? Ex. A thug who may be sweet on the inside.

No, that's mean 50%

Uh oh. Your ex texted you. Will you respond or will you ignore and ghost them? scan to answer!

SUDOKU

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VAQUERO VOICE

What are you most excited about for the fall season?

--Compiled and photos by Venisha Colón



Jose Cavazos
marketing senior

"I think for this fall season, I'm more excited for the cold breeze to come in. So walking around campus will be nice and relaxing. Definitely more layers, layering a lot."



Sarah Escobedo
psychology freshman

"What I'm most excited about is probably the events that they're planning to do for the Student Union."



Savannah Aguilar
early care and childhood studies freshman

"I'm actually really excited about Thanksgiving ... and just eating all that turkey, being a big back. And also, Halloween. I'm a really big Halloween person."

VALLEY SPOTLIGHT

GILBERT HERNANDEZ: EL BÚHO DE LA CIUDAD

SOFÍA CANTÚ SAUCEDA
THE RIDER

Después de estudiar ingeniería mecánica en Worcester, Massachusetts, Gilbert Hernandez regresó a Brownsville para comenzar un cambio en su carrera.

Hernandez regresó a Brownsville después de terminar sus estudios para ser parte de la industria petrolera pero después de estar involucrado con diferentes organizaciones de la comunidad se dio cuenta que tenía que hacer un cambio.

“Los miembros de las organizaciones querían ver a Brownsville prosperar y tener éxito”, dijo. “Y claro, eso me hizo querer hacer algo también”.

A finales del 2021 Hernandez contrajo COVID-19 y su tiempo en cuarentena lo impulsó a comenzar a trabajar en una nueva idea.

“Durante todo este tiempo siempre escuché la misma queja una y otra vez, y eso era que no tenemos una librería”, dijo.

En el 2022 Hernandez decidió abrir una librería en el área del

centro de Brownsville.

“Había mucho impulso para revitalizar el centro y yo quería ser parte de eso”, dijo.

Ese mismo año Hernandez comenzó a vender libros de segunda mano gracias a una tarjeta de crédito que el banco le dio para comenzar su negocio.

“Por medio de esa tarjeta de crédito de \$5,000 pude comprar grandes cantidades de libros en eBay y comenzar un puesto [de libros]”, dijo.

Vendió libros de esta manera por todo un año y “en la mitad de todo esto, noté que estaban renovando el edificio Calderoni, donde Búho está ahora”.

En el 2023 Hernandez pudo abrir la biblioteca Búho, ubicada en 1140 E. Washington St. en Brownsville.

“Puse mi cara contra la ventana sabiendo que iba a estar ahí, no sabía adónde ir, no había un número para llamar, no sabía con quién hablar, pero pensé ‘Sería maravilloso que estuviera aquí’”, dijo.

Hernandez compartió que tiempo después, el dueño del edificio Calderoni lo estaba buscando porque pensaba



FOTO CORTESÍA GILBERT HERNANDEZ

Gilbert Hernandez, dueño y fundador de Búho, biblioteca con libros de segunda mano, ubicada en 1140 E. Washington St. en Brownsville.

que la biblioteca Búho era un negocio “diferente e ideal” para estar ahí.

“Así que pude firmar el contrato de renta de alquiler y fue así como hice la transición a una tienda”, dijo.

Hernandez compartió que ha sido “hermoso” cómo ha crecido la biblioteca.

“[...] Porque la comunidad de verdad se identifica con la

misión de Búho”, dijo.

Hernandez dijo que la mejor parte de ser dueño de la biblioteca es ver el impacto que está provocando.

“El consejo que le podría dar a alguien que quiera empezar un negocio es que encuentres algo único e inyectes esto a tu negocio de forma que conectes con el resto de la comunidad”, dijo.

100 AÑOS DEL DESCUBRIMIENTO CELEBRA LA DETECCIÓN DE ONDAS GRAVITACIONALES DE LIGO

SOFÍA CANTÚ SAUCEDA
THE RIDER

El 14 de septiembre del 2015, dos detectores del Observatorio de Ondas Gravitacionales con interferómetro láser, por sus siglas en inglés, detectó la primera detección directa de ondas gravitacionales y la colisión y fusión de un par de agujeros negros después de un siglo de que la teoría general fue precedida por Albert Einstein, de acuerdo a la Fundación Nacional de Ciencias.

Este año, la detección alcanza 10 años desde su descubrimiento.

Profesores y personal de UTRGV y de la institución de legado Universidad de Texas en Brownsville, ahora parte del Instituto de Ciencias Espaciales del Sur de Texas, por sus siglas en inglés, fueron parte del programa ganador del Premio Nobel de detección de ondas gravitacionales en 2015, de acuerdo a la página web del instituto.

El viernes, STSSI, junto con el Centro de Astronomía de Ondas Gravitacionales y el Centro de Radioastronomía Avanzada, con el apoyo de la Sociedad Astronómica del Sur de Texas, serán anfitriones de la Celebración Decenal del Descubrimiento de las Ondas Gravitacionales en Salón 1.224 en el Main Building del campus de Brownsville.

Joseph Romano, director de STSSI y profesor de física y astronomía, dijo que espera que los estudiantes que vayan al evento aprendan que UTRGV está involucrado en un “descubrimiento innovador”.

“Es una gran colaboración consistente



VENISHA COLÓN/FOTOS RIDER

Teviet Creighton, director del proyecto de Tecnología Espacial STARGATE y profesor de física y astronomía, explica cómo el Simulador del entorno espacial STARGATE funciona el 19 de septiembre. Replica el duro vacío y las temperaturas cercanas a cero del espacio exterior.

“Es una gran colaboración que consiste de muchos científicos.”

—Joseph Romano, director de STSSI y profesor de física y astronomía

de muchos científicos alrededor del mundo”, Romano dijo.

“Estudiantes y profesores en UTB en ese tiempo y todavía son parte de esta colaboración”.

Los profesores actuales de UTRGV involucrados en el descubrimiento

son: Teviet Creighton, líder de investigación; Mario Diaz, asesor superior de STSSI; Soumya Mohanty, profesor de física y astronomía; Soma Mukherjee, profesor de física y astronomía; Volker Quetschke, líder de instalaciones en STSSI; Malik Rakhmanov, profesor asociado de física y astronomía; y Romano.

Durante el evento, profesores, administradores y exalumnos lideraron un panel de discusión enfocado en la investigación y experiencia del descubrimiento de las ondas gravitacionales.

Romano dijo que espera que el evento

atraiga e involucre a estudiantes de licenciatura y posgrado al programa de investigación de STSSI.

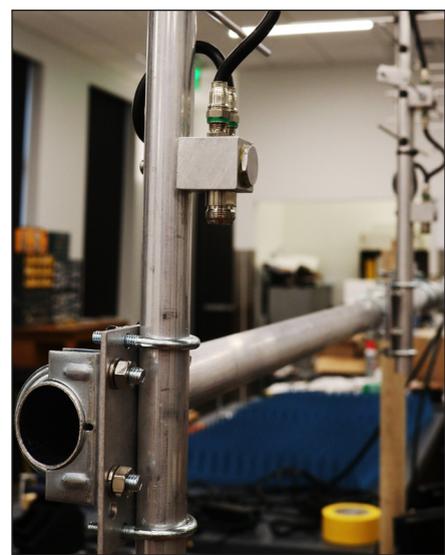
“Tal vez en dos, tres años de ahora, ellos escribirán algún artículo importante o ellos harán algún descubrimiento”, dijo.

La celebración de 10 años estará abierta a estudiantes y profesores en ambos campus.

Vikki Penix, coordinadora del programa de STSSI, escribió en un mensaje el 29 de septiembre a The Rider, Astronomía en el Parque: Los Sonidos del Cosmos se llevará a cabo de 5:30 a 9:30 p.m. el sábado en Resaca De La Palma, ubicado en 1000 New Carmen Ave. en Brownsville.

También habrá una presentación y firma de libros abierta a la comunidad durante el evento.

Para más información, visite el sitio web de la Celebración Decenal del Descubrimiento de las Ondas Gravitacionales.



THE SOUL IN SOIL

EDUARDO ESCAMILLA
A&E EDITOR

Artist Beatriz Guzman Velasquez does not just make art; she embodies a regenerative process, using transformation as a verb to actively rewrite negative local narratives about the Rio Grande Valley. The result is a profound inner and outer change, thoughtfully captured in her current exhibition.

Rewriting the Land, Rewriting the Soul, is on display and concludes with a closing reception at 6 p.m. Friday at the Charles and Dorothy Clark Art Gallery on the Edinburg campus.

The exhibition presents a body of work created primarily using natural pigments the artist grew and harvested herself—a powerful, lengthy process she calls a symbolic act of change.

For Guzman Velasquez, who is originally from Reynosa, Tamaulipas, Mexico, and now lives and works in the Valley, the show challenges long-held, often negative narratives about the region's climate and its people.

Regarding the name of the exhibition Guzman Velasquez said, "I felt that it comes from stories that were told about the Valley, or stories that we carried around about the Valley, like, we can't really grow anything here, or the climate is really harsh."

She explained she felt her community, specifically Mexican American residents, were excluded from a positive narrative about

the land.

"It just felt like we weren't part of a story where something was good, right?" Guzman Velasquez said. "I think that that's what the work initiates, like this action or the symbolic meaning of change that I want to bring about."

She developed the work following a prestigious Ragdale Residency and a Beginner Farmer Fellow program through UTRGV.

The fellowship allowed her to cultivate plants and transform their roots, leaves and wood into the materials she uses for her multimedia installations.

The connection to the raw material is vital to her practice, according to the artist.

"I'm extending the amount of time in order to produce the actual material that I'm working with," she said. "It's taking, like, a year, the whole entire year, to actually produce paint."

Guzman Velasquez said the extended relationship with the process affects her deeply.

"I'm just embodying all these materials that I'm growing, I'm learning from them, and it's just changing the way that I look at life," she said.

Guzman Velasquez specifically mentioned her connection to root vegetables—carrots, beets and radishes—for their ability to connect her to the earth.

She favors mesquite wood, stating she has a "strong connection with mesquite charcoal, the

smell ... and the texture of it."

In addition to physical materials, the themes of ancestral and intergenerational healing run through the exhibition.

Guzman Velasquez drew inspiration from her grandmother, honoring her by naming her studio Juana Simona.

"I just realized that women, no woman in my family, had owned a piece of land and had created a space specifically for creativity," she said.

By creating that space, Guzman Velasquez said she feels she is actively rewriting her family's history.

She is acutely aware of the relationship between her art and its specific audience.

Guzman Velasquez cited filmmaker Guillermo del Toro as an influence, stating she was "liberated" by the idea that not all art must cater to the masses.

"All of my career up to now, has been about selecting spaces that will understand what is important to me, rather than me catering to ... the outside world per se," she said.

Guzman Velasquez wants her work to offer viewers a feeling of empowerment and possibility.

"I think, like the word for me, is just providing them with possibilities of how to change ... stories that they carry around with themselves," she said. "That they have the authorship to actually write their own story and change their surroundings as well."



MYKEL DEL ANGEL/THE RIDER PHOTOS

Shown is "Studio Natural Pigment," (natural pigments, graphite on cotton paper, the artist's hair, wood and natural pigments in a glass container) an installation by artist Beatriz Guzman Velasquez.



Shown is "Cosecha," (overalls, corn seeds in glass jar, corn husk and letters from Mikaela Ramire) an installation by artist Beatriz Guzman Velasquez in the Rewriting the Land, Rewriting the Soul exhibition.



Shown are prints from the "Natural Pigment Workshops," by artist Beatriz Guzman Velasquez in the Rewriting the Land, Rewriting the Soul exhibition.

SOUND CHECK AT THE GREMLIN



JOSE RODRIGUEZ/THE RIDER PHOTOS

Singer and saxophonist Jonas Derbez performs on stage Sept. 27 at The Gremlin, located at 322 S. 16th St. in McAllen. Derbez is a member of Diles Que No Me Maten based in Mexico City.



Hannah Rocha performs Cherry Chrome's new song "Detras de la Luna" Sept. 27 at The Gremlin, located at 322 S. 16th St. in McAllen.



DANIELA CHAPA-REYES/THE RIDER

MAKING A SPLASH

DANIELA CHAPA-REYES
THE RIDER

Swimming up on a new season, the UTRGV Women Swimming & Diving Team faced each other on Sept. 26-27 at the Orange & Gray Intrasquad Meet and Pentathlon at the City of Pharr-PSJA Natatorium. During the meet, the Grey team defeated Orange 127-101.

Head coach Betsy Graham said coming into the fall season, the team is shaping up "pretty good."

"This past weekend was a good indicator of how my freshmen are going to race because I hadn't seen them otherwise," Graham said. "I knew what the other girls could do, but it was good to watch them race and see how they approach competitions."

The team welcomes back

17 familiar faces this season. Graham said the girls have had a year under the culture the team is trying to establish.

"I think the freshmen have come in and ... they are really bubbly and full of excitement and I think that has lifted us," she said. "They are excited to be here, they're excited that it's a new program and how they can make their mark on this program."

Diving coach Jennifer Mangum said the intrasquad meet was a good test to see the areas they have been working on during practice.

"Granted, all the finishes weren't quite there yet, but the take offs, I saw a lot of good things in the take offs in the height of the board," Mangum said. "Now it is a matter of ... let's fine tune some things and try to make it a little sharper and a little bit better."

Back/individual medley

sophomore Annaleagh Stahl marked a great performance during the meet, coming in first in the 200 and 100 medley. Her team came up short of 1.25 seconds during

"We're going to be able to do a lot better."

*--Betsy Graham,
swimming and diving
head coach*

the 400-free relay, closing up in second.

Stahl said she wants to evolve her technique.

"I want to get my turns down quick, make sure those turns are nice and tight," she said. "I don't want to feel super tired the entire time I'm racing, I want to just kind of build into everything that I

am swimming."

Stahl said some goals she has for the fall season is to better her time for the 400-individual medley and 200 backstroke by a couple of seconds.

"The meets coming up is just kind of like working toward that goal," she said. "Keeping that technique right where I need to be so far mid-season and conference ... we can shoot off and have those great times."

Graham said she now knows where the team stands after the intrasquad meet.

"We're going to be able to do a lot better this year," she said. "I basically know where we're going to be able to put people now and be able to defeat them."

The team's next meet is against The University of Texas Permian Basin 11 a.m. Saturday in Midland.

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

TENNIS FALLS INTO PLACE

DANIELA CHAPA-REYES
THE RIDER

The UTRGV Men's Tennis Team has had a decent start to their fall season as it finished its first tournament on Sept. 14.

"The guys have shown up every day ready to work in hot, windy, humid conditions," head coach Nathan Robinson said. "They're always excited to be here."

Robinson said the Jake Frederick Memorial Islander Open, hosted by Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, was overall positive. During the tournament, juniors Santiago Serrano and Ivo Isqueiro earned wins after withdrawal from their opponents.

Continue reading the full story on our website.



DANIELA CHAPA-REYES/THE RIDER PHOTOS

Freshman Luke Bishop prepares to hit the ball during practice Sept. 23 at the UTRGV Orville I. Cox Tennis Center on the Edinburg campus.



Sophomore Loic Young hits the tennis ball during practice Sept. 23 at the UTRGV Orville I. Cox Tennis Center on the Edinburg campus. Young was defeated alongside junior Santiago Serrano during a doubles match 6-4 Sept. 14. at the Jake Frederick Memorial Islander Open hosted by Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi.

'WE GOT TO GET BETTER'

ALI HALLOUM
THE RIDER

The Vaqueros (4-1, 0-1 SLC) suffered their first loss in their Southland Conference opener on Sept. 27, falling 45-31 to Southeastern Louisiana University (3-2, 1-0 SLC), as of press time Friday.

But what is the next step for the nascent Vaqueros football program? Head coach Travis Bush spoke with the media following the team's first open practice after the loss.

Bush said although the team could match up and remain competitive in the conference, there are areas where the team got exposed and need improvement. He said it is a "process."

"[We] got exposed on a lot of things there," Bush said. "Which is good for our program. It's exactly what we needed. But the bottom line is, we've got to get a lot better as a program. We will."

UTRGV struggled early in the game on both sides of the ball, finding themselves down three touchdowns with five minutes left in the second half. Although they clawed back into the game, they ultimately lost by two scores.

Starting quarterback Eddie Lee Marburger

took responsibility for the loss against Southeastern Louisiana in his comments to the media Tuesday. He had an interception in the second quarter that put the Lions up 21-0.

"I gotta be better," Marburger said. "I take accountability for that [pick], and we're gonna fix that. And just as an offense in general, I don't think we played as well as we're capable of."

He added he "hates the taste of losing," and while the defense played well, he and the offense have room for improvement in future games, and the loss lit "a new fire under us."

Defensive coordinator Brian Gamble said he was looking forward to returning to the practice field and working on improving as a defensive unit.

Speaking exclusively with The Rider, he said the defensive team is working on improving its execution, which he said was "the biggest thing" they needed to do in-game.

"I told the guys somewhere that in the second quarter that 'We're gonna watch this thing on Sunday and you guys are gonna be sick,'" he said. "So, it was a good learning moment. We challenged the guys in

yesterday's meeting to play to the standard, to not let the moment be too big."

Gamble added no matter what the outcome was, win or loss, they would continue to improve as a unit and hold themselves "to the standard they set for themselves" in non-conference play.

Redshirt freshman defensive back Alijah Prosser told The Rider the Southeastern game, as well as remaining conference matchups, are going to be "12-round fight[s]" where the team has to play faster and more physical football.

"We got to come out with energy," Prosser said. "Playing fast. I know for the defense, and the whole team, we took that loss personal, so we can't let that happen again. And that's how we're working out here."

Bush said the team will constantly strive to improve week-to-week, and "it's always about us, never about our opponent."

"When you get in those big ballgames and bullets are flying, can we learn from that?" he said. "[It is about] how can we maximize our potential this week in practice and be as good as we can be Saturday."

The Vaqueros played their home conference opener Saturday.

The team will have a bye week and then play on Oct. 18 against Lamar University on the road.

"We got to come out with energy."

*--Alijah Prosser, redshirt
freshman defensive back*



DRAVA RIOS/THE RIDER

Redshirt senior quarterback Eddie Lee Marburger practices throwing reps during morning practice Tuesday in the Vaquero Performance Center on the Edinburg campus.

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