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THE STUDENT VOICE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS RIO GRANDE VALLEY

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New rule may cut federal loans for certain programs

MARIAH LYDIA ESCOBAR
THE RIDER

Certain college programs could lose eligibility for federal student loans beginning July 1, 2027, if their graduates fail to meet specific earnings requirements under a new U.S.

Department of Education rule. UTRGV personnel said they are monitoring the U.S. Department of Education's Earnings Accountability Rule but do not have enough information to determine which university programs may be affected. Under the new framework, undergraduate programs will be evaluated against the earnings of high school diploma holders, while graduate programs will be compared with those who hold bachelor's degrees. Programs who fail the measurement in two of the three consecutive award years will lose eligibility to participate in federal direct loan programs for at least

two years, according to the Department of Education. The Department of Education said the rule is intended to protect students from borrowing for programs which do not improve their earnings and to hold colleges accountable for graduates' financial outcomes. In an emailed response, UTRGV said it is awaiting additional information and guidance. "At this time, however, we do not have sufficient information to determine which programs, if any, may be impacted at UTRGV," said university personnel. Tyra Taylor, a nutritional science senior, said she had not heard about the

changes to federal student loans but the changes raised concerns. "For a lot of people I know, it's like, the only way that they're even able to get an education," Taylor said. She said students who depend on loans could face challenges pursuing the career they want. "I think for some students that rely on those federal loans, it's like limiting their choice for pursuing the education that they want, or pursuing the career they want," Taylor said.

See **LOANS**, Page 3

WARY OF WATER



ADRIAN HERNANDEZ /THE RIDER
UTRGV's groundskeepers Andres Aguilera (left) and Ulises Martinez blow debris and water from paths making it safer to walk for faculty, staff and students Oct. 2 next to the Science and Engineering buildings on the Edinburg campus.

Emergency official predicts more rain for RGV

JORGE RIOS
THE RIDER

The Rio Grande Valley avoided the worst of Hurricane Polo's remnants in late September, but local emergency officials are warning residents to remain informed about changing weather conditions and forecasts. Ricardo Saldaña, Hidalgo County Emergency Management coordinator, said forecasts initially predicted the storm would bring significant rainfall to the Valley, but conditions changed as the storm moved through the region. "As the forecast changed on a daily basis, the rains tapered off from the north... Significantly, it didn't impact us as much as it did in Starr County on the initial onset," Saldaña said. Hurricane Polo struck Mexico in late September, with its remnants traveling across Southwest Texas and causing flooding in parts of New Mexico, El Paso, and as far as San Antonio, according to emergency officials. Dean Kyne, UTRGV professor of sociology and visiting scholar at Harvard University, provided The Rider with trajectory data for Hurricane Polo from HURREVAC, a website accessible only to emergency officials. The data showed Polo was initially a Category 5 hurricane that formed in the Pacific before weakening to Category 2 and making landfall in Mexico's Baja California. Kyne, who also serves as program coordinator for UTRGV disaster studies, provided hurricane category simulations from the Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale website, which demonstrate that even the winds of a weaker Category 1 hurricane can cause structural damage. UTRGV had also sent emails about possible flooding on the Edinburg campus on Oct. 1. Saldaña said the changing forecasts surrounding Polo

were reminiscent of the volatile nature of Hurricane Harvey in 2017. "The forecast model showed Harvey's track was a direct impact to the mouth of the Rio Grande in South Texas, and it was a Category 5 hurricane at that time," he said. "The forecast changed overnight, tracking it all along the coast were [it] finally made [an] impact just north of Corpus Christi." Saldaña added if hurricanes such as Polo or Harvey directly impacted the RGV, "We would have ... significant ... flooding in our area."

NO UPCOMING HURRICANES

Hidalgo County official said there is to be more rain in the area, as well as a "wet winter."

Although the worst of the Rio Grande Valley's hurricane season is coming to a close, Saldaña said residents should continue monitoring local weather warnings, as severe weather can be unpredictable. Currently, there are no upcoming hurricanes projected for the Valley. However, the region could see an increase in rainy weather this winter, according to emergency officials. "We're going to start seeing a lot more rain coming into our area. We're going to have a wet winter, as they say," Saldaña said. He added the winter outlook is a prediction and

weather forecasts can change. In addition to complex weather predictions, Saldaña said other barriers could contribute to public confusion. He said the public often overlooks "the area where [a] hurricane is going" and "what side the hurricane [is] going to be on" regarding the sides of the wind and rain. When asked whether public misconceptions were attributed to the Valley's lack of severe weather, Saldaña replied himself and other emergency officials of the region "do a tremendous job year round to educate the public via social media ... interviews ... presentations"; however, awareness really comes down to residents' willingness to educate themselves. Marlene Gonzalez, an integrated health science freshman, said she was not aware of Hurricane Polo. Although she attributed her lack of awareness to the Valley's limited severe weather, she agreed residents could do more to educate themselves. Gonzalez said the weather does affect her experience on campus. "Driving in the rain is kind of scary," she said, adding she would probably stay home if rainy weather became severe. Saldaña said he emphasizes that residents monitor the weather through official sources, such as AccuWeather and The Weather Channel. He also warned students about potential misinformation on social media, further adding to barriers when accessing the Valley's weather conditions accurately. For more information on hurricane preparation, visit ready.gov

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 Rise and Grind
University Recreation will host a morning workout session including **indoor cycling** and **interval training** from 7:15 to 8 a.m. and at the same time Wednesday in University Recreation Studio 1 on the Edinburg campus.

Access for Sex-Ed Weekly Tabling
Access for Sex-Education will host a tabling event from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. and at the same time Wednesday in the Student Union on the Edinburg campus.

Carnival of Madness Tabling
Campus Activities Board will host a Carnival of Madness tabling from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. on the Brownsville campus at the Main Building courtyard.

Accessibility Awareness Event
Student Accessibility Services will host an accessibility awareness event with creative connections from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Ballroom Cenizo Room on the Edinburg campus and at the same time Wednesday in the Music, Science and Learning Center on the Brownsville campus. Attendees can enjoy **decorating a water bottle** and **rock painting**.

Power Pump Circuit GX
University Recreation will host a class from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. in the University Recreation Multipurpose Room 1.202 on the Brownsville campus. The circuit workout combines **strength training** and **cardio intervals**.

RGV German Club Meeting
The RGV German Club will meet from 3:45 to 4:45 p.m. on the Brownsville campus in Sabal

Hall Room 1.106.

EAC General Meeting
The **Environmental Awareness Club** will meet from 3 to 5 p.m. in Health Affairs Building West Room 1.140 on the Edinburg campus.

Fall Runs
Vaquero Run Club will meet from 5:15 to 6:30 p.m. and at the same time Thursday at the Life and Science Building on the Brownsville campus.

Zumba
University Recreation will host a Zumba session incorporating **interval training** from 6 to 7 p.m. and at the same time Wednesday in University Recreation Studio 1 on the Edinburg campus.

Pre-PA Society Meeting
The **Pre-PA Society Chapter** will meet from 6 to 7:30 p.m. in the Math and General Classroom Building Room 2.418 on the Edinburg campus.

Kick Boxing
University Recreation will host a beginner-friendly kickboxing class from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. and at the same time Wednesday in University Recreation Studio 2 on the Edinburg campus.

Cycle Fit
University Recreation will host a spinning class from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. in University Recreation Studio 1 on the Edinburg campus. Cycle Fit will also be hosted Friday from 6 to 7 p.m. at the same location.

Tuesday
Bible Study
Christian at RGV will host a Bible study from 10:45 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. in Liberal Arts Building South Room 303 on

the Edinburg campus.

Coffee Fundraiser

Diabetes and Obesity Awareness will host a coffee fundraiser from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. on the Edinburg campus in front of the University Library.

Monster Cookie Decorating

The **Student Union** will host monster cookie decorating from noon to 1 p.m. on the Brownsville campus in the Student Union.

Stronger GK

University Recreation will host a lifting class from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. in the Recreation Center Multipurpose Room 1.202 in Brownsville.

Pilates

University Recreation will host a pilates class from 6 to 7 p.m. and at the same time Thursday in University Recreation Studio 1 on the Edinburg campus.

Boxing

University Recreation will host a boxing class from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. in University Recreation Studio 2 on the Edinburg campus.

Spooktacular

Campus Activities Board will host Spooktacular from 7 to 11 p.m. in the Student Union Theater on the Edinburg campus. Attendees can enjoy a night of **sweet treats and entertainment.**

Wednesday

BAA General Meeting

The **Brownsville Accounting Association** will meet from 11 a.m. to noon in Sabal Hall Room 2.112 on the Brownsville campus.

Billiards Tournament

The **Student Union** will host a Billiards Tournament from

noon to 2 p.m. in the Student Union Game Room on the Edinburg campus.

Networking Groups
The **Center for Student Involvement** will host a networking group from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m. in the Bronc Room on the Edinburg campus.

Emo Dance Party
The **Student Union** will host an emo dance party from 4 to 6 p.m. in the Student Union on the Brownsville campus.

Thursday
Express Circuit 30 GX
University Recreation will host a beginner-friendly interval training workout from noon to 12:45 p.m. in Room 1.202.

ENACTUS General Meeting
ENACTUS will meet from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. in the Student Academic Center Room 1.103 on the Edinburg campus.

FSA General Meeting
Filipino Student Association will meet from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. in Liberal Arts Building South Room 341 on the Edinburg campus.

Friday
NMDP General Meeting
The **National Marrow Donor Program** will meet from noon to 1 p.m. in Liberal Arts Building South Room 180 on the Edinburg campus.

Carnival of Madness
Campus Activities Board will meet from 7 to 11 p.m. at the Student Union Lawn on the Brownsville campus. Attendees can enjoy free **carnival games, food and drinks.**

--Compiled by Mariah Lydia Escobar



POLICE REPORTS

The following are among the incidents reported to University Police between Sept. 28 and Oct. 2

Sept. 28
10:04 a.m.: A student reported someone took money from her wallet in Edinburg, which was inside her backpack left in the Performing Arts Complex A while she attended band practice. The case is under investigation.
10:30 a.m.: An officer responded to parking Lot E31 after a male student reported his unattended vehicle had been struck. The case is under investigation.
12 p.m.: An officer responded to the Student Union North Patio after a female student slipped while walking down the stairs. She declined emergency medical services and requested an escort to the Student Health Clinic.
1:37 p.m.: An officer initiated a traffic stop for a defective equipment violation, and the vehicle pulled into parking Lot E1. During the investigation, an officer discovered a non-affiliated male passenger had an outstanding arrest warrant from the Hidalgo County Sheriff's Department for burglary of habitation. The man was taken into custody and transported to Hidalgo County for booking.
4:58 p.m.: A student reported two male students directed abusive language toward him at University Recreation on the Edinburg campus, which he found

offensive. The case is under investigation.

5:14 p.m.: An officer responded to the Edinburg campus after a female student reported falling from her scooter the previous day. She was later transported to Edinburg Regional Hospital for further medical evaluation.

Sept. 29

1:47 a.m.: A UTRGV officer and the Edinburg Fire Department responded to a fire alarm at Heritage Hall. They determined a student's humidifier had triggered the alarm, reset the alarm panel and cleared the building for re-entry.

3:01 p.m.: A non-affiliated male reported purchasing a vehicle through an online auction that was registered to the university but said he never received the title from the seller. He was advised to contact the auction company.

Sept. 30

10:28 a.m.: An officer met with a student at the Health Affairs Building West on the Edinburg campus, who reported receiving threatening text messages from an unknown person while on campus. The case is under investigation.

11:01 a.m.: An officer responded to parking Lot E18 on the Edinburg campus after a student's vehicle was struck while parked, causing the student to be struck while standing nearby. She declined emergency medical assistance, and both individuals exchanged information.

1:30 p.m.: A UTRGV K9 officer assisted the U.S. Secret

Service with an explosives K9 sweep at the Harlingen Convention Center.

3:37 p.m.: A student reported an unknown person took his unsecured scooter from a bike rack near the Student Union. The case is under investigation.

6:07 p.m.: A student reported he struck a parked, unattended vehicle while trying to park in Lot E9 on the Edinburg campus earlier that morning. He did not obtain information about the vehicle before going to class. The case is under review.

Oct. 1

7:23 a.m.: An employee reported while using a string trimmer for groundskeeping near the Education Complex Building on the Edinburg campus, the equipment propelled a small piece of wood that struck a window. A work order was submitted for repairs.

11:35 a.m.: A student reported leaving his guitar on a shuttle bus after arriving at the Edinburg campus. The guitar was later located with the transportation supervisor, who had received it for safekeeping.

2:49 p.m.: A student reported an unknown male asking questions that made her feel uncomfortable at the University Library in Brownsville. Officers located the non-affiliated male and determined that no crime had occurred. Due to previous interactions with the same male on campus, he was issued a criminal trespass warning for all UTRGV property.

2:55 p.m.: An officer responded to the Liberal Arts Building South on the Edinburg campus after an employee found a suspicious paper on a bulletin board. Further investigation determined that no crime had occurred.

Oct. 2

11:28 a.m.: An officer responded to the University Library after an active fire alarm. Upon arrival, the officer found a pull station had been damaged while the building was being cleaned. Environmental Health and Safety arrived and repaired the pull station.

7:53 p.m.: An officer responded to parking Lot E16 on the Edinburg campus regarding a minor two-vehicle collision. No injuries were reported.

Oct. 3

3:55 p.m.: An employee reported several vandalized flyers in the Liberal Arts Building South on the Edinburg campus. The case is under investigation.

Oct. 4

2:12 p.m.: An officer responded to the Lamar Building after a report of a smoke odor. The Edinburg Fire Department determined a vent in the women's restroom had caught fire. The fire was extinguished, and the building was cleared for re-entry. No injuries were reported.

--Compiled by Valeria Tokun
Haga

State receives federal compensation for previous border expenses

MARIAH LYDIA ESCOBAR
THE RIDER

Texas received \$7.5 billion in federal reimbursement for money spent on border enforcement, although it is unclear how this may affect the Rio Grande Valley.

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security approved the reimbursement through the State Border Security Reinforcement Fund on Sept. 18, according to the Office of the Texas Governor.

The money covers expenses Texas used for border security operations, including spending on Operation Lone Star.

Mark Kaswan, a political science professor for the School of Political Science, Public Affairs, Legal and Security Studies, said decisions about how the reimbursement affects Texas are up to state lawmakers.

“The decisions about how to use the money, the entity that makes those decisions is the state legislature,” Kaswan said.

The RGV has been one of the regions affected by increased border security as Operation Lone Star brought thousands of state law enforcement and National Guard personnel to border communities.

The increased presence had mixed effects on the economy because additional personnel spent money at stores and other businesses, according to Kaswan.

“It was difficult to get a hotel room in the Rio Grande Valley,” he said.



MICHELLE HERNANDEZ / THE RIDER

Shown is the border fence near Lincoln Park and the Interdisciplinary Academic Building on the Brownsville campus.

“The hotel rates increased substantially because all the hotel rooms were being taken by the National Guard.”

The reimbursement is connected to money Texas spent on border enforcement, including Operation Lone Star, which the state spent \$11 billion on under Gov. Greg Abbott to increase state involvement in border enforcement, Kaswan said.

Mario Gonzalez, a biology senior, said the size of the reimbursement stood out to him.

He said he believes some of the money should be spent in the Rio Grande Valley because it is so close to the border.

“You could just look to your left sometimes and you see the wall,” he said.

Although the federal reimbursement does not necessarily mean the money will be spent in the RGV, Kaswan said the state could use the money to replace Texas funds which have already been spent on border security.

“If the seven and a half billion dollars goes to Operation Lone Star, it doesn’t necessarily mean more money for Operation Lone Star,” Kaswan said.

Replacing state funds could free money for other priorities, such as improving roads, schools, water infrastructure and other state needs, according to Kaswan.

He also noted higher education as an area of funding concern because UTRGV faces challenges competing with other universities on staff salaries.

“People aren’t going to want to take jobs here if they’re offered jobs at other universities where they can make more,” he said.

It remains uncertain where the reimbursement will have an impact, according to Kaswan.

“It’s really up to the legislature when they convene to decide exactly where, how they’re going to use this money,” he said.

CLUB SPOTLIGHT

ITSA expands to Brownsville

DANNA AVALOS AVILA
THE RIDER

A new chapter of the Information Technology Students of America will start on the Brownsville campus giving local students easier access to their workshops, networking and career-building opportunities.

Erick Lanza, a graduate student in the Master of Business Administration program and president of ITSA, said the organization matters in Brownsville because they want to have a community for IT and any majors to be able to connect, meet others and integrate technology into their career.

According to Lanza, most of their events happen on the Edinburg campus, which means students off campus can not easily attend in person.

“[ITSA-BTX] brings closer access to those students who normally wouldn’t drive all the way to Edinburg to attend an event held by a student organization,” he said.

Lanza said the ITSA-BTX chapter began during the spring semester, then slowed and resurfaced under new officers, including himself.

Now, with new officers settled into their positions and a new semester, his goal for ITSA-BTX is to “give students more opportunities outside the classroom” along with inviting guest speakers and producing workshops.

Regarding opportunities offered by the organization, Lanza said the ITSA-BTX has a planned speaker from Microsoft who is currently the director of data and AI for the University of Texas Systems.

“We have a plan [for him] to be a guest

speaker in the first week of November,” he said. “We’re hoping for it to be in person ... but if that is unable to happen, we’re going to have him virtually. ... We’re already working on that.”

Victoria Huara, an information systems junior and vice president of ITSA-BTX, said the organization seeks to shape the technology community in Brownsville by being open to anyone.

“A lot of people are very intimidated when it comes to IT and how it’s incorporated with their career,” she said. “So, we just want it to be more approachable. A big goal of the club is [that] no experience [is] required.”

Montserrat Valderrama, an international business freshman and member of ITSA-BTX, said she joined because the club needed a graphic designer, so she assisted with logos and graphics for it.

Valderrama said she looks forward to future networking events and technical workshops.

“If you’re interested in coding, if you’re interested in going into IT or cybersecurity, it is a very good club to join,” she said.

Lanza added ITSA-BTX is striving to give students opportunities they would not find in a classroom and is currently finding ways to provide them.

He said he encourages students to explore the organization and participate in any future events.

“Give us any feedback ... or any questions or even if they have something that they would like to create, to just let us know,” Lanza said.

For more information, visit @utrgvitsabtx on Instagram.

LOANS *Continued from Page 1*

Abigail Beaver, a theatre education sophomore, said she has cut two classes, applied for work-study and looked for scholarships to help cover her school expenses.

Beaver said she worries uncertainty about loan access may discourage students from continuing their education.

“I know people who are considering even dropping out, and like, not pursuing an education just because they are scared

they’re not going to be able to access those loans or even get any in the first place,” she said.

Beaver added scholarships provide uncertainty because applying does not automatically guarantee an award.

She said she would not consider applying for a private loan due to their interest rates and repayment requirements.

Taylor said lawmakers should consider the contributions that graduates make across different professions.

“They’re all, like, important,” she said. “All of them.”

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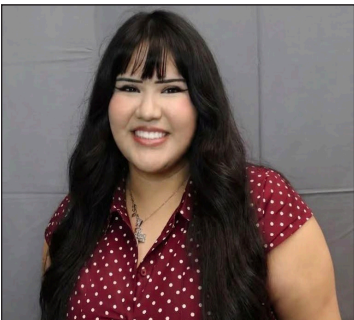
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COLUMN OF THE WEEK

Maybe dead internet theory is a best case scenario



TIANA MEZA
SPORTS REPORTER

I'm not ashamed and am self aware enough to say I am a very chronically online person. I am a frequenter of TikTok and Instagram reels, I love a good reference, and short form content just speaks to my little ADD brain. Most of my feed is about DC comics and delicious edits of Robert Pattinson, and that's the way I like it, but often I'll get a curveball that makes me think, and I make the awful decision to

check the comment section and no longer like it. For example, I was doomscrolling one day, and I stumbled upon a video of a literal child, no more than like 11 or 12 years old, doing a silly little video singing and just being a cringey child. I thought it was cute and reminded me of the type of videos me and my friends would make when we were kids on my childhood iPad. Being a kid is inherently cringey, so it made me jolly to see kids are still cringe. However, the comments did not share the same sentiment as me. As I scrolled, I became more upset. How could people feel such an intense hatred for a random child on their phone? And how unemployed are they? It made me wonder how these people could even be real, and if, perhaps, they aren't. I really hope they aren't.

For my peace of mind, I choose to believe a mass amount of hate comments, whether it be telling a child to off themselves because they're simply expressing themselves, or those spam heart comments on Ken Paxton's AI ads, are just simply bots and evidence of the dead internet theory. The dead internet theory is a theory that the internet is no longer mostly human users, but rather populated by bots and AI-generated fake accounts. I remember hearing about the theory as a kid, but was probably too busy digging holes in my yard or making my dolls have a torrid divorce to care. But, I also grew up when the internet was still maturing. I was literally born the same year as the iPhone. Me and the internet are practically siblings. When I was little, I watched whatever had Elsa from "Frozen" in it, which did definitely lead me to

witness videos that were very concerning for a 6-year-old, but at least I had an idea of what I was watching. The shift to TikTok, coming with not being able to choose what's going to appear next, leads me to some very strange corners of the internet and simply places I don't want to be and opinions I don't want to hear. It seems all I ever read on TikTok is draining amounts of negativity and chains of people arguing in the comments, or random comments that are strings of emojis. It just makes me wonder at what point not being compelled to comment on everything we see disappeared. Even in completely harmless videos about cooking or some new gadget, there's a comment with thousands of likes saying, "Well I can't eat gluten" or, "What if I don't have thumbs?" It just hurts my head.

At this point, I think it would be a relief to know the internet isn't even real people anymore, and is just bots trying to elicit a reaction from people for engagement, so I can retain my belief in humanity. I know the whole point of the internet and social media is that people can connect and share varying opinions, but when it's become an echo chamber of negativity, do I even want to know what other people are thinking? After a long day of attempting to be an adult and maintaining relationships, I think myself and others would rather see anything else other than more people complain or be evil online. With how polluted social media is, it's kind of become a form of exposure therapy for me. I got so tired of doomscrolling and having downtime, I got a job, and now I'm writing this.

EDITORIAL CARTOON

What more do I add?



VAQUERO VOICE

Scary experience

--Compiled by Alizzaya Guel



Crystal Garay
biology junior

we always believed the house was haunted, and he would see this lady in white outside his window. And it would always stare at him. And he would always cry about it, so one day his parents made him sleep outside on the porch to get over it. [The lady] just stared at him the whole time while he was crying. So, that's one paranormal experience I know about."

Q: Have you had a haunted experience here at UTRGV?
A: "No, unfortunately, I haven't."

Q: What's your scariest personal experience?
A: "My [grandfather,] when he was younger, he would always tell us the story about how we live in Elsa, Texas, like,

Q: Do you personally believe in the paranormal? Why or why not?
A: "Yeah, I do. I think it's definitely something that's really real."

Q: What's your scariest personal experience?
A: "One scary story I actually have from when I was younger in, like, fifth grade. So, we had this ghost app on our phones. And in this ghost app, it would tell you where the ghosts are, and then you could talk to them. There was this rumor that the school was haunted, and I was like, 'Well I'm a brave girl, so I'm gonna go do that.' So, I got the app, and I have it on my phone, and the ghost [was] talking. And [it said,] 'Oh, go to the corner.' So, we all shuffle to the corner and were standing there in the corner. And it gets, like, super cold and the AC was, like, super hot in the room, and it got freezing cold, and the ghost was like, 'Help me. Help me. Help me.' And we're like, 'Oh my God, how do we help you?' and then it was just like, 'Get out.' ... The bell rang ... mind you, it's fifth grade, so we're all ... [freaking] out. And then we all just get our stuff and ran out the room. And then that night, I had ... a scary dream where I was on my bed, and these creatures just kept grabbing me from under the bed, and the dream kept repeating. And then, I woke up, and I was like, 'Oh my God, I'm never doing that again,' and now I'm a witch, so that backfired."



Jordan Monroe Farias
theatre freshman

Q: Have you had a haunted experience here at UTRGV?
A: "Seeing an ex."
Q: Do you personally believe in the paranormal, why or why not?
A: "Yes, I do. Because of that experience ... I'm also now a witch and somebody who just talks to spiritual beings, ... That kind of opened my eyes and I was like, 'I don't wanna do that anymore.' Then I was like, 'Wait, you guys are kinda chill. I'll stick around.'"

WACKY WEB POLL

LAST WEEK'S RESULTS:

YOU'RE IN COLLEGE;
WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE
INSTANT NOODLE
FLAVOR?

60%
Chicken

16%
Beef

24%
Shrimp

THIS WEEK'S QUESTION:

WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE CLASSIC HALLOWEEN
MONSTER?

CHECK OUT THE POLL ON
OUR SOCIALS! @UTRGVRIDER

Oficial de emergencia predice más lluvias para el Valle

JORGE RIOS
THE RIDER

El Valle del Río Grande evitó lo peor de los remanentes del Huracán Polo a finales de septiembre, pero oficiales de emergencias locales advierten a los residentes mantenerse informados sobre los cambios y en los pronósticos en las condiciones meteorológicas . Ricardo Saldaña, coordinador del departamento de Manejo de Emergencias del Condado de Hidalgo, dijo que inicialmente se pronosticó que la tormenta traería lluvias significativas al Valle, pero las condiciones cambiaron conforme la tormenta se movía dentro de la región. “Los pronósticos cambian de un día a otro, las lluvias disminuyeron desde el norte. ... Significativamente, no nos afectó tanto como afectó al Condado de Starr en el inicio”, Saldaña dijo. El Huracán Polo tocó tierra en México a finales de septiembre, sus remanentes viajaron a través el suroeste de Texas causando inundaciones en partes de Nuevo México, El Paso y hasta San Antonio, según oficiales de emergencias. Dean Kyne, profesor de UTRGV de sociología y profesor visitante en la Universidad de Harvard, proporcionó a The Rider con datos de la trayectoria del Huracán Polo de HURREVAC, sitio web solo accesible para oficiales de emergencias. Los datos mostraron que Polo inicialmente era un huracán de categoría 5 que se formó en el Pacífico antes de debilitarse a la categoría 2 y el huracán tocó tierra en México en Baja California Sur. Kyne, quien también sirve como coordinador del programa Estudio de Desastres en UTRGV,



Trabajadores de mantenimiento de UTRGV Andres Aguilera (de izquierda) y Ulises Martinez limpian los restos y agua de los senderos para que personal y estudiantes puedan caminar seguros el 2 de octubre junto a los edificios de Ciencias e Ingeniería del campus de Edinburg. “No llovió mucho y no me costó llegar al campus”, dijo Gerardo Moctezuma, estudiante de segundo año de biología.

proporcionó simulaciones de las categorías de huracanes del sitio web de Escala de Vientos Saffir-Simpson, que demostró que incluso vientos débiles de un huracán categoría 1 pueden causar daños estructurales. UTRGV también envió correos electrónicos sobre posibles inundaciones en el campus de Edinburg el 1 de octubre. Saldaña dijo que los pronósticos cambiantes en torno a Polo recordaban la naturaleza volátil del Huracán Harvey en 2017. “El pronóstico mostraba que la trayectoria de Harvey iba a impactar directamente en la

boca del Río Grande en el sur de Texas, y era un huracán de categoría 5 en ese momento”, dijo. “El pronóstico cambió de la noche a la mañana, siguiendo su trayectoria a lo largo de la costa hasta que finalmente impactó justo al norte de Corpus Christi”. Saldaña agregó que si los huracanes como Polo o Harvey impactaran directamente al Valle “tendríamos inundaciones significativas en nuestra área”. Aunque lo peor de la temporada de huracanes en el Valle del Río Grande está llegando a su fin, Saldaña dijo que los residentes deberían continuar monitoreando los

aviso meteorológicos locales, ya que el clima severo puede ser impredecible. Por ahora, no hay ningún huracán pronosticado para el Valle. Aun así, la región puede ver un incremento de clima lluvioso este invierno, según oficiales de emergencias. “Vamos a empezar a ver muchas más lluvias llegando a nuestra área. Vamos a tener un invierno mojado, como dicen”, Saldaña dijo. Agregó que la perspectiva para el invierno es una predicción y que los pronósticos pueden cambiar. En adición a los pronósticos climatológicos complejos,

Saldaña dijo que otras barreras que pueden contribuir es a la confusión del público. Dijo que el público a menudo pasa por alto “hacia dónde se dirige el huracán” y “en qué lado se encontrará este” en los que respecta a la distribución del viento y la lluvia. Al preguntársele si las ideas erróneas del público se debían a la ausencia de fenómenos meteorológicos extremos en el Valle, Saldaña contestó que él y otros oficiales de emergencia de la región “realizan una labor enorme durante todo el año para educar a la población a través de redes sociales ... entrevistas ... [y] presentaciones”, no obstante, la concientización depende en última instancia, de la disposición de los residentes a informarse por ellos mismos. Marlene Gonzales, estudiante de primer año de ciencias integradas de la salud, dijo que no estaba enterada sobre el Huracán Polo. Aunque ella atribuyó su falta de conciencia sobre esto al limitado clima severo del Valle, ella afirmó que los residentes podrían hacer más para educarse a sí mismos. Gonzales dijo que el clima afecta su experiencia en campus. “Manejar en la lluvia da un poco de miedo”, dijo, agregando que ella preferiría quedarse en casa si las lluvias se vuelven severas. Saldaña dijo que insiste a los residentes que se mantengan al tanto del clima a través de fuentes oficiales, como AccuWeather y The Weather Channel. También advirtió a estudiantes sobre posibles desinformaciones en redes sociales, lo que agrava aún más las dificultades para conocer con más precisión las condiciones climáticas del Valle. Para obtener más información sobre cómo prepararse para un huracán, visita ready.gov.

Manos a la calabaza



Ethan Alfaro, estudiante de primer año en gestiones de negocios, empieza con el tallado de calabaza participando en el concurso de tallado de calabazas el jueves en la veranda de Student Union en el campus de Brownsville.



Estudiantes de último año de biología Itzel Alfaro (izquierda) y Kimberly Bernabe pintan y tallan en equipo una calabaza como parte del concurso de tallado de calabazas el jueves en la veranda de Student Union en el campus de Brownsville.



Roberto Sparks Garcia, estudiante de segundo año en trabajo social, participa en el concurso de tallado de calabazas el jueves en la veranda de Student Union en el campus de Brownsville.

‘Delgado Dreams’

Fine Arts couple debut thesis exhibition

KAYLA MARTINEZ
THE RIDER

UTRGV Master of Fine Arts students SD Kendra Delgado and Juan Delgado debuted their thesis exhibition, “Delgado Dreams,” Thursday in the Charles and Dorothy Clark Gallery at the Liberal Arts Building South on the Edinburg campus.

Displayed across the exhibition were paintings, miniatures, dolls, action figures and clothes all created by the pair.

“We’re both artists. Full disclosure, Juan and I are married,” SD Kendra Delgado said. “So, we were like, ‘Let’s get this MFA degree together.’ We both love art, so he encouraged me to follow through and apply, so we got in.”

As part of MFA graduation requirements, students have to host an exhibition showcasing their work before they graduate. “You have to ask professors, a minimum of three, to be on your committee. ... They give you feedback on anything you need,” SD Kendra Delgado said.

In the process of preparing for the exhibition, the couple was advised by their committee on what themes to explore.

“The main things that they emphasized in our first introduction was play, the concept of play,” Juan Delgado said. “Both of our ideas of what childhood is and was, lifestyle, culture, and even art and education is totally different.”

SD Kendra Delgado, a Jamaican-American woman, said her work consists of



KAYLA MARTINEZ/ THE RIDER PHOTOS

Masters of Fine Arts student SD Kendra Delgado’s displayed work consisting of hand-made cultural attire, textile portraits and matching Barbies for the “Delgado Dreams” exhibition. The exhibition is located at the Charles and Dorothy Clark Gallery in Liberal Arts Building South on the Edinburg campus and will be on display through Oct. 23.

sewing, quilting, embroidery and crafting clothing for Barbie dolls.

“A big part of my work is the concept of archive,” SD Kendra Delgado said. “The women that I saw in my daily life were all educated, they all had jobs and they were either professors or doctors or lawyers. ... Those women also collected Black Barbies.”

SD Kendra Delgado said she wanted to incorporate her relative’s histories into her art. The textile portraits displayed in the exhibition had accompanying Barbies with

hand-stitched matching outfits.

Juan Delgado’s pieces differed in subject matter and medium.

“We grew up migrant farm workers, we traveled all the time. So, we didn’t have a set home to collect things to think about current events or fashion or trends or none of that,” Juan Delgado said. “As a child, one of the things I was exposed to or found in a garage that I could hold onto was a Hot Wheels that fit in my pocket ... [It was] a grounding figure. So, that bit has been

my focus, when I started the program, revisiting that.”

Displayed across the exhibition were miniatures and dioramas featuring the Hot Wheels Juan Delgado spoke of, all inspired by photographs his mother took of their travels, he said.

“So, recreating that through dioramas, I re-explore my identity, my culture, and how I grew up and how I identify now in the society with my experience and what I’m learning, not just in the program, but with my wife, SD, and her experiences,” Juan Delgado said.

When asked what she wanted people to take away from the exhibition, SD Kendra Delgado replied she wants people to understand the choice to “honor the daughter.”

“That’s one of the new academic theories that’s caught on recently ... to make sure that your daughter is educated and has what she needs to have a very Barbie type of lifestyle, where she has her own material possessions, her own income,” she said.

“That is what’s being honored in my work, because my family made that choice with my grandma, my mom, my aunts and then with me.”

According to SD Kendra Delgado, the message being honored in her work contrasts Juan Delgado’s work, because unlike her, he is a first-generation college student.

“That is why I want the audience to take a bit of my experience and reflect on their own, and mirror those experiences and reflect on the possibilities that are available,” Juan Delgado said. “Not just being first [generation] here in the Valley... there are possibilities, and you can make them happen.”

The “Delgado Dreams” exhibition will be on display in the Charles and Dorothy Clark Gallery through Oct. 23.



A Barbie stands on display in front of a textile portrait created by SD Kendra Delgado, a Masters of Fine Arts student, for the “Delgado Dreams” exhibition in the Charles and Dorothy Clark Gallery in Liberal Arts Building South on the Edinburg campus.



A hands-on miniature diorama created by Juan Delgado, a Masters of Fine Arts student, for his co-ed exhibition “Delgado Dreams” depicts a South Texas scene in the Charles and Dorothy Clark Gallery in the Liberal Arts Building South on the Edinburg campus.

Cadaver Conversations: Coworkers #6

WHIZZ

CLANK

WHAT A DISASTER. WELL, AT LEAST NOW DR. NERD IS GETTING FREED.

Kayla M 10/12

OH, FLACO. YOU'RE STILL HERE.

WORRIED ABOUT YOUR LITTLE FRIEND?

HUH? OH. I GUESS. IT'S NOT FUN GETTING EXTRACTED FROM A BODY.

HMM. MUST BE HARD TO KNOW YOUR FRIEND IS GOING THROUGH THAT.

YOU MIGHT EVEN WANT A DAY OFF AFTER THAT.

YOU'D DO THAT FOR ME?

WOW! MAYBE MISS VALERIE IS FINALLY WARMING UP TO ME—

WELL, TOO BAD. LIFE MOVES ON, FLACO. SO SHOULD YOU. SEE YOU AT 9 A.M. TOMORROW. SHARP.

UGH, NO! WAY TO GET MY HOPES UP, LADY!

Men’s basketball seeks student involvement



PHOTO COURTESY UTRGV ATHLETICS

The Vaqueros Men’s Basketball Team gather for a group huddle on Oct. 5 after the open practice at the UTRGV Fieldhouse on the Edinburg campus.

TIMOTHY DAVID
THE RIDER

The Vaqueros Men’s Basketball Team rallied up the Rio Grande Valley by hosting its first open practice event Oct. 5 for the start of the season at the UTRGV Fieldhouse on the Edinburg campus.

Aside from the open practice, the event included meet-and-greets with players, free food and autographs, giving the basketball program an opportunity to build relationships with UTRGV students.

The men’s basketball team has begun a change in its goals, focusing on becoming more recognizable to UTRGV students and increasing interaction with them.

The movement, influenced by head coach Brandon Chambers, includes initiatives to involve the Vaqueros in student events and to increase student involvement throughout the basketball season.

One way coach Chambers pushed this student engagement with the basketball team was by buying hundreds of dollars worth of coffee for both Edinburg and Brownsville students while also spending time with them on Sept. 10.

Chambers said, in a news conference video by UTRGV Athletics, the two main elements of the movement are the players and the students. These two reasons are a driving force in the program’s health, with the students being the heart of the program.

“There were some events on campus, like the FSL Kickback, The Stomp, different things like, that spurred the idea into existence. ... So, as soon as I heard [about the open practice event,] I was like, absolutely,” Chambers said. “We talk about Rally The Valley and how UTRGV is the heartbeat of the community. Well, the student population here is the heartbeat of our program.”

For Chambers, the open practice is only the beginning of continued interaction between the men’s basketball team and students.

While holding back tears during the news conference, he said how much he feels blessed to be in the position he is now as a coach, but also how the movement roots from a personal obstacle in his life and career, with an authentic focus on having the men’s basketball team create a

connection with the students.

“Everything we do is for you guys. ... I’ve been told ‘no’ a lot throughout my career and life too, you know, at 17 I was homeless, kicked out of school ... that’s why I do what I do, I have this chip on my shoulder,” Chambers said. “But after two, three months, we’re doing this recruiting piece, and there’s days where I leave the office and I’m just in tears because I am just so blessed. ... So, I am talking to a recruit and I’m like, this is the first time in my career where I want to win for the people around me, more than myself.”

During the news conference video by UTRGV Athletics, redshirt senior guard Always Wright and senior guard B.B. Knight said the open practice was something exciting to do for the students and they have already begun interacting with students to become a familiar face on campus.

“We have little events, where we go to the Student Union, The Stomp, hand out flyers making sure everybody sees, make sure they see our personalities, and I think seeing that is great,” Wright said. “I think

it’s huge, really for the students, and even the community to be able to connect with us, like off the court, so they really know you as a person before they go and watch you play.”

Criminal Justice freshman Damien Garza, who was watching the open practice, said this event gives him inspiration from the players, and how this event is a way to bring exposure to students interested in basketball.

“I’ve loved basketball since I was a little kid, and I see these guys on UTRGV media, and I don’t know, something about them inspires me, like, maybe I can be part of the team someday,” Garza said. “This gives people a chance to look at what people can do, I mean see the chance they have in life too. Like many people who want to grow up and become basketball players, or want to commit to UTRGV, and play for the UTRGV.”

The men’s basketball team will have their season opener at 7:30 p.m. Nov. 2 against Texas A&M-Kingsville at the UTRGV Fieldhouse on the Edinburg campus.

ATHLETE OF THE WEEK Erin Maguire



PHOTO COURTESY UTRGV ATHLETICS

Erin Maguire attempts to pass the ball against Northwestern State during a home game Feb. 2 at the UTRGV Fieldhouse. The Vaqueros lost, 64-59.

Erin Maguire is a fifth-year guard from Belfast, Ireland. During the 2025-26 season, she played in 33 games and helped the team secure the winningest season in program history while competing in the Women’s National Invitation Tournament and the Southland Tournament. Maguire is the leader and one of the oldest players on the women’s basketball team, with more than 100 games under her belt, averaging 8.2 points and 3.2 in assists per game.

Q:What clicked for you about South Texas and UTRGV compared to Belfast, Ireland or New Jersey?

A: “Oh, literally everything is different about those places. Belfast is this teeny, tiny little city compared to here and New Jersey ... literally everything’s different. The facilities are amazing over here, the opportunities are amazing over here. Obviously, we know that. We do what with what we can in Belfast and in Ireland, but we don’t have a whole lot, so a lot of it’s just a lot of heart and hard work over there, and not that it’s not over here, too, but, you know, we have a lot more going for us and a lot more given to us over here that we wouldn’t have at home, so I’d say those were the biggest differences.”

Q: When you wrap up your career here at UTRGV, what do you want the legacy of Erin Maguire to be?

A: “I just hope that I’ve come in and made some form of impact. Like, I love working with the kids when we get to do those for community service days, and I love my teammates, so I’m hoping that I can have left an impact of being as good of a leader as I possibly could. And being there for my teammates, and always wanting to, like, have their back and rally behind them when they do well, and pick them up when they do, when they don’t. So, yeah, I’d say, the impact of just being the best possible teammate and leader I could be.”

Q: Who’s your favorite basketball player of all time?

A: “My favorite basketball player would be my sister, Enya Maguire. I think she is awesome. If my sister Anna was still playing, I would pick her, too. It would be hard to pick between the two, but right now, without a doubt Enya Maguire is my favorite basketball player.”

--Compiled by Tiana Meza

City commission approves moratorium on AI data centers

Gael Espinoza
The Rider

Brownsville’s City Commission unanimously approved a 90-day moratorium on artificial intelligence data centers during its special meeting Wednesday at City Hall.

The moratorium is scheduled to take effect Nov. 5, pending a second and final reading at the commission’s Nov. 4 special meeting.

The commission has faced public opposition over a rumor to build an AI data center at 7480 Padre Island Highway, as reported by The Rider on Aug. 26.

Mayor John Cowen told The Rider after the meeting the commission recognizes residents’ concerns about data centers coming to Brownsville.

“[It’s] important that we develop those parameters based on community input, so we created the Environmental Task Force to analyze basically what rules they recommend to be put into place,” Cowen said. “So, they’re going to be doing a lot of research over the next 90 days, but that moratorium will be extended another 90 days. So, we’ll have 180 days to review the proposed rules and regulations around data centers and for those recommendations to be coming back to the commission for approval.”

Cowen said there will be public town halls during the period to gather additional



Gael Espinoza / The Rider

Mayor John Cowen listens to residents’ comments Wednesday at the city commission special meeting for the AI data center moratorium. “We can make [data centers] very difficult to operate,” he replied when asked about a permanent ban on data centers in Brownsville.

public input, along with further research into data centers.

Public hearing and reading for the extension will first take place on Jan. 19, followed by a second and final reading Feb. 2. If extended, the moratorium would expire May 18.

Christopher Basaldu, a Brownsville resident and co-founder of the South Texas

Environment Justice Network, said although the moratorium was approved, he believes the commissioners were strict during the public hearing period for the moratorium.

“I was not expecting just how strict they were going to be in suppressing the public and suppressing free speech here,” Basaldu said. “It is a

public hearing. It should be the most open to getting people’s comments and opinions ... trying to slavishly devote itself to rules, like, little rules, and turning off microphones, and telling people that they can’t speak because they’re not on the correct topic. I think that’s reprehensible.”

During the meeting, the

commission reminded residents the public hearing was limited to the moratorium. Officials said off-topic comments could result in a speaker being removed from the meeting.

Roberto Delgado, a Brownsville resident, said he felt “suspicious” about the commission.

“I think one thing that’s been kind of clear is that I feel, like, there’s a little bit too much of a smiling nature, too much of a happiness kind of showing across the commissioners for something so devastating that could be put upon our community,” Delgado said. “It just seems a little bit, how do I say, suspicious. The fact that there’s so much joy and glamour right now. ... But, I mean, that is all for these things to come to light as time goes along.”

Basaldu and Delgado said they want a permanent ban on data centers in Brownsville.

Cowen said the city could make operating data centers more difficult, but is not sure if they “can explicitly ban data centers.”

“We can’t just prevent a specific type of business, because there are rules on those things,” Cowen said. “We can make it very difficult to operate, and it would not be a preferable location. I think we need to do more research in terms of the legality of a potential ban and how we can get that done.”

The mayor said he looks forward to receiving additional public input at the Nov. 4 City Commission special meeting.

Monster’s out of its cage



Adrian Hernandez / The Rider Photos

Bari Musawwir, Grave Digger driver, autographs a limited card for a fan at the meet and greet Thursday at the Pharr-PSJA-UTRGV Natatorium.



Grave Digger monster truck on display for the meet and greet Thursday at the Pharr-PSJA-UTRGV Natatorium. “It’s funny, in person it looks smaller than in the photos and videos online,” visitor Roland Good said.



Visitor Roland Good Jr. posing for his parents at the Grave Digger meet and greet Thursday at the Pharr-PSJA-UTRGV Natatorium. The event, hosted by Matt’s Building Materials and The City of Pharr, provided attendees with food, drinks and games.



Fans made two lines at the Grave Digger meet and greet, with one to take photos with the truck and one to meet driver Bari Musawwir.