

11-14-2017

The Prospector, November 14, 2017

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THE PROSPECTOR

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VOL. 103, NO. 12

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO

NOVEMBER 14, 2017

UTEP CELEBRATES DIVERSITY

BY ADRIAN BROADDUS

The Prospector

When Mohammed Iddrisu, a graduate student in English rhetoric and writing, got on a plane to the United States for the first time, an overwhelming sense of apprehension overcame him.

He is an African native, born and raised in Ghana, and the fifth of his seven siblings. He's also a Muslim, who earned his bachelor's degree of English in Ghana, and served as a teacher in Saudi Arabia for two years.

But he wanted to further his education, thus calling for his new destination, which was America, and more specifically UTEP.

He kept hearing chatter from the U.S. that attacked his race and ethnicity and it frightened him.

However, when he stepped foot in El Paso and got his bearings with the city and university, the cultural inclusivity of the region quickly eased his anxiety.

"Coming to the U.S., one as an African and two as a Muslim, in this political climate and what we saw during the campaign, it was horrible," he said. "But coming here, the way people receive you—no one sees you as an immigrant, African or Muslim—people just see you as a human being. People want to know more about your culture and want to tell you about their culture."

Iddrisu joined the African Students Organization (ASO) at UTEP to further promote his culture and learn about others' different cultures. On Monday, Nov. 13, his organization participated in the 2017 International Food Fair, as part of the university's International Culture Festival week.

It became more than just a food contest as 16 different organizations from UTEP joined together to not only celebrate their respective cultures through food, but each club joined to commend the different ethnicities, races and cultures through inclusion and information at their respective booths.

Aside from the club's traditional dishes of

African jollof rice and kelewele (fried plantains) entrée, there's a deeper celebration that they wanted to showcase.

"What makes me proud, first as a Ghanaian and second as an African, is our rich culture," he said. "Our culture is one that promotes communal living. When we came here, we decided to not create a Ghanaian students (organization), but rather an African students organization so we can create a communal sense of living. This sense of family, this sense of communal living is the thing that's most key. We have people from Ghana, Nigeria, Kenya, Coco and others from Ghana. So this sense of communal brings us together. We feel we bring all that together."

Along with the ASO booth, the Bangladeshi Student Association, Le Club Francais, Bhutanese Students' Association, Black Student Union, Brazilian Culture Center and Nepalese Student Association made cultural-specific dishes and promoted first-hand knowledge of their backgrounds.

Just three feet away from the ASO booth was the Bangladeshi Student Association's table, decorated with political leaders, artwork and information about Bangladesh. After winning the food fair contest on Monday, they are back-to-back champions. The specific dish they're known for is their combo dish that includes chicken curry, pulao rice, semai and mago lacchi.

Kazi Md Masum Billah, a member of the Bangladeshi Student Association and a doctoral student in mechanical engineering, said that their mission for the university's international week goes beyond just a plate of food.

According to UTEP's breakdown of international students, there are 55 students enrolled from Bangladesh.

"It's not all about the food, it's about the culture. You can see a lot of great people behind this and we are mostly graduate students doing master's or doctor's programs," Billah said. "I would say more than 90 percent of people from Bangladesh are Muslim and the other

see DIVERSITY on page 4



DESIGN BY ALEJANDRA GONZÁLEZ / THE PROSPECTOR



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NOVEMBER 14, 2017

OPINION

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
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You’ll get through, even if you’re not a U.S. citizen

BY GRECIA SANCHEZ
The Prospector



The life of an international student isn’t easy. Since my first semester, I was put under a lot of pressure by my family, my friends and my high school teachers to succeed in this “great opportunity to study with the best,” as they would say.

My mother does not know English and my father isn’t always available due to work. There is no one in my family who has studied outside Mexico. So, as a bilingual high schooler, with only one semester of driving, I was immediately put in charge of my admission process at UTEP.

I had to prepare for the admission exam and TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) myself, since my high school did not have any workshops on tests or application processes. I had to learn about driving in El Paso and parking. I had to deal with the huge amount of paperwork the Office of International Programs needed for my admission as an international student. I had to take care of my documents as a foreign student with several immigration offices and I had to do all of that within two months, since I had changed my major to philosophy at the last minute.

Therefore, I missed the deadlines for scholarships, and to this day I haven’t been able to get a scholarship because most them are for U.S. citizens. Because of this, I used to see El Paso as this foreign land and I used to think of myself as being the outsider.

My first barrier came when I had to pay for my first semester at UTEP. Once I went to Mike Loya Academic Services Building to ask about the process, the stress took over.

I had asked the lady if I would be able to pay it in cash and I remember she said, “yes, you have until 6 p.m. to do that, you can do it online or you can come here,

but it has to be done before 6 p.m.” I had understood that I had until 6 p.m. to pay for my tuition, and it was one day after I received the email notification about tuition for the first time.

Of course, I was freaking out. I immediately told my mom and started calling my father to see what we could do. It was such a stressful situation and at the end of the day, I made my father pay, and he had a huge amount of debt on his credit card for something that we could have easily paid throughout the next month, as I learned afterwards.

This experience changed me in the sense that every time I would ask something of someone, I had to overcome the language barrier. I would ask things thoroughly, explaining I was an international student and that I had different paperwork than the average student.

Thinking back, I realize now I could have saved so much trouble by just asking. Being afraid to speak in English, even though I already knew the language, has been one of the most difficult challenges I have had to overcome.

Still, it has been great to learn from my mistakes and look forward. Now, I am not afraid of studying somewhere else because of language, I do not think I am less of a person for not knowing certain vocabulary, and most importantly, I have learned how to embrace changes in my life. The life of an international student isn’t easy, but it is not as impossible as one may think at the beginning.

✉ Grecia Sanchez may be reached at theprospectordaily.news@gmail.com.

UnDACAmended, but #HereToStay

BY AYLIN TAFOYA
The Prospector



I’ve recently found myself unapologetically reconnecting with and joyfully embracing my Mexican heritage. After 10 years of residing in the United States, English has become my preferred and most-used language, although Spanish was my first-learned language.

My attitude became that of a “gringa,” according to my mother, which in her eyes meant that I thought I could handle everything by myself and could do whatever I wanted. Even the food I preferred to eat was undoubtedly not Mexican, even when it attempted to be.

However, after the Electoral College voted Donald Trump as president, things in my life took a drastic turn. Somewhat rewinding the movie that is my life into what it used to look like almost five years ago, giving me a totally new perspective into who I am and who I want to be.

DACA, or Deferred Act for Childhood Arrivals, came into play for me during the second semester of my sophomore year at Northwest Early College High School. It was the first time I had heard of it, and I eventually got accepted into this wonderful immigration program.

Before that, my life was a mess and full of uncertainty. I did not know what the purpose was to further myself, or what to pour all of my energy into if there was an unclimbable wall waiting for me at the end of a very difficult road. I couldn’t figure out my purpose, and I made a couple of bad choices along the way. Nevertheless, my extremely supportive family stayed behind me, and slowly but surely, everything changed. DACA, an opportunity-filled future, warmly greeted me after a brief storm.

DACA seeks to guide undocumented immigrants like myself on a path toward residency and citizenship. Through this pro-

gram, if the requirements are met, undocumented immigrants were granted a two-year permission to freely reside in this country. Also, based on financial need, we were allowed to work during our deportation-free stay. Most DACA recipients are students wanting a college education that can prepare them to contribute to society.

Because of DACA, I obtained my associate’s degree before I graduated from high school. I went on to seek my bachelor’s degree in multimedia journalism at UTEP and got to pay for that education without taking out student loans and drowning in debt by working my way up from the bottom every summer for the Chihuahuas.

This policy was established by the Obama administration in June 2012, and because of it, I got to live out the American dream. However, it was rescinded by the Trump administration in September 2017, leaving Congress to deal with enacting new immigration laws for us once-again undocumented immigrants. This is where the rewinding comes into play.

Without DACA, we are taking all of this progress, all of this opportunity and throwing it away. We are watching our lives go in circles and down the drain. President Trump’s voice keeps echoing in my head, “they’re bringing drugs, they’re bringing crime, they’re rapists,” just as he said of us while announcing his candidacy last June. Since taking office, he has deported thousands of men, women and undeserving children. Most recently, a 10-year-old girl, Rosa Maria Hernandez, who has cerebral palsy, is at risk of deportation after being stopped at a Border Patrol checkpoint and accompanied to the hospital by officers, who waited outside her room as she recovered from surgery. If the failure to implement a good immigration policy doesn’t stop with this innocent, defenseless girl, who’s to say I’m not next?

This, however, has not stopped me from speaking my mind or trying to help others speak theirs.

Becoming a journalist has given me a platform where I can speak

my mind and speak the truth. It’s already proving hard being un-DACAmended, meaning undocumented, and I will be without DACA in March 2018.

I’m limited to the internships I’m allowed to apply to, the jobs that will take me in for the next five months and the classes I’m so desperately trying to take so I can graduate next May. My family has already started the process of trying to ask for me to become a resident. However, it’s proving difficult with my 21st birthday nearing, which complicates things because of the fact that the residency process is elongated once one turns into a full adult at that age.

More so, if Congress does not come up with something soon, which there has been very little to no talk of happening, I could more easily be deported. Panic fills my household as each day passes and nothing is done to help facilitate my dream of continuing and improving the life I’ve been living in the United States.

Immigrants help build and strengthen this nation, but are unfairly villainized as invaders. Nearly all of the 800,000 DACA recipients have been the victims of this oppression. Recently, a United We Dream walk-out was staged at UTEP, which made me feel like I’m not the only one with a progressive outlook to counteract the close-mindedness of some DACA-opposing individuals, and gave me hope about the tides turning in our favor.

In the meantime, I’ll surf the waves as best as I can, because we’re here to stay.

✉ Aylin Tafoya may be reached at theprospectordaily.news@gmail.com.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

This week’s poll question:
If tuition increases, where would you like to see your money go?

answer at theprospectordaily.com

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Sunny

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High 72

Low 47

Mostly Sunny

0% Chance for Rain

High 73

Low 46

Mostly Sunny

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UTEP proposes tuition and fees increase for the next two years

A photograph of Gary Edens, Vice President of Student Affairs, standing in front of a large presentation screen. He is pointing at a pie chart on the screen titled "UTEP Revenue Comparison FY84 & FY13". The screen also displays two smaller pie charts for "FY 2014" and "FY 2015".

ELENIE GONZALEZ / THE PROSPECTOR
Vice President of Student Affairs, Gary Edens presented the tuition increase proposal last week.

BY ELENIE GONZALEZ
The Prospector

Students at UTEP may be paying higher tuition and fees in the next two years, according to a tuition forum held Nov. 7. The proposal for tuition and fees increase was unveiled during a presentation at an open forum for UTEP students, faculty and staff last week by the Division of Student Affairs. If approved, tuition and fees could increase by an overall average of 6.44 percent for the 2018-19 academic year and by 6.24 percent for 2019-20. The increase would impact all students enrolled during those semesters. Jacob Villanueva, senior organization and corporate communication major, plans to graduate in December 2018, and thus he will be impacted by the proposed increase. "As a student paying for that increase, I do not like it," Villanueva said. "UTEP has an advantage over other schools in the UT System because it has such a lower

cost per semester, so I feel it will do more harm than good." According to information provided by Vice President of Student Affairs Gary Edens, undergraduate students taking 15 hours per semester are currently paying \$3,965. The proposed increase means students would pay around \$238 more for that semester. Edens broke down the costs between UTEP and other emerging research institutions in the state, explaining that UTEP has one of the lowest tuition and fees rates in the state and in the nation. For example, tuition and fees for an academic year at UT Dallas currently costs \$12,162 per year, while UTEP students pay \$7,348. The last time UTEP saw an increase in tuition and fees was two years ago when the University of Texas System Board of Regents approved a 4.5 percent increase, which brought up the cost of tuition and fees for the 2016-17 and 2017-18 academic years.

While tuition and fees have been increasing, state funds are not. Edens said that budget cuts toward higher education by the state have also put a large dent in what the university has been able to do. "We have tightened our belt pretty severely in the last several years to the point that we actually had a reduction in this last year's budget," Edens said. "We had no merit increases for faculty or staff, no one got a pay raise, and we did some very severe hiring freezes, travel and purchasing freezes that really impacted a lot of our areas." As the growth in enrollment continues, it has added a demand for hiring more professors. Therefore, Edens said that without increasing tuition, the requirement for more professors would not be met. "We feel that it's a substantial increase to the students, but we also feel that it is needed to maintain academic quality, recruit and retain the very best faculty on our campus, and to maintain the success that UTEP is seeing, not only locally but nationally," Edens said. "With the growth in enrollment, we simply need to hire some more staff in some of our operations or we just can't function." A committee made up of mostly students, along with deans and administrators, has been working for weeks to come up with a plan that will best suit the needs of the university. The current plan would implement a differential tuition plan, meaning that a student in the College of Education would be paying less per semester than a student in the College of Engineering. Therefore, the tuition and fees increase would vary based on the college in which a student is enrolled. "In reality, it costs more to hire an engineering or business faculty member than it does to hire an education or liberal arts faculty member," he said. Another reason for the differential tuition plan is because the committee believes that students who graduate with degrees in engineering and business are more likely to gain higher salaries than those who graduate with degrees in education, liberal arts and science. If the plan is approved, students in the colleges of education, liberal arts and science would see tuition rise 5 percent for the two following academic years. Students taking 15 hours per semester would pay \$4,163 in 2018-19 and \$4,372 in 2019-20. Students in the colleges of engineering and business would see the highest increase at 11 percent. Students enrolled in the College of Engineering would pay \$4,403 in 2018-19 and \$4,852 in 2019-20, while business students would pay \$4,441 and \$4,874 through those respective years. The College of Health Sciences would see costs rise 8 percent, resulting in tuition reaching \$4,268 in 2018-19 and \$4,582 in 2019-20 and the School of Nursing would be increased by 9 percent, raising tuition \$4,313 in 2018-2019 and \$4,672 in 2019-2020. Edens said that this is a reflection of the costs associated with operations of the colleges and institution. Also included in these costs is a \$1 increase in the student service fees. Students service fees fund all student services in the university, such as the University Career

Center, UTEP Counseling Center and the Center for Accommodation and Support Services. Brittany Carlock, a senior communication major, has concerns about the increase. "I can't say I'm happy about the increase because now tuition is going to be about \$4,000 per semester, which is starting to become unaffordable," she said. "But I do understand that there's not a whole lot UTEP can do about it. I know UTEP needs to find ways to keep professors here with all the students who are coming in, I just wish it would be a bit lower than 6 percent." Students concerned about paying for the increase should know that the tuition increase would also mean an increase in financial aid. According to Edens, 15 percent of tuition and fees must be set aside for institutional aid. Also coming back is the summer Pell Grant, which students can apply for beginning this summer. Edens said the proposal is in its early stages and the final draft will be voted on by the student majority committee and sent to Dr. Natalicio so she can make her final changes before submitting it to the UT System Board of Regents, who will have the final vote in February. Edens and the committee want to hear feedback from the UTEP community on the current draft and welcome all comments and suggestions. Final proposals are due to the UT System Office of Academic Affairs on Dec. 4. Find out more about the increase at UTEP's tuition and fees website, <https://www.utep.edu/tuition/>. Follow Elenie Gonzalez on Twitter @eleniegonz

NOTICE TO STAKEHOLDERS:

The University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) is undergoing a re-accreditation review of its Master of Public Health (MPH) Program by the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH). CEPH will be making a site visit to UTEP on February 15-16, 2018. CEPH will be accepting written third-party comments regarding the UTEP MPH program until January 15, 2018 (30 days prior to its site visit).

Comments should be sent to:
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INTERNATIONAL CULTURAL FESTIVAL

UTEP will celebrate its third annual International Education Week featuring a weeklong International Cultural Festival. On Wednesday and Friday the festival will host a Bazaar and Entertainment from 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. at the Union Cinema in the Union East. There will be a lecture every day from different speakers from 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. in the Blumberg Auditorium. For a list of events visit www.sa.utep.edu/ICF.

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DIVERSITY from page 1

10 percent are Hindu, Buddhist and others.”

Back home, Billah speaks Bengali and now speaks fluent English. He decided to come to UTEP because of its engineering program.

“The biggest difference is the humidity and the snowfall,” he said. “The weather is really cool in El Paso, we all really like it.”

Similar to Iddrisu, Billah appreciates the ethnic diversity approach UTEP offers.

“We heard that El Paso is the immigrant-friendly city. Being here we can see the other international students are really nice, and also the people from El Paso have been really nice,” he said.

Unlike the others, Sonam Lhamo, the president of the Bhutanese Students’ Association and a senior physics major, did not directly choose to come to UTEP to study. Instead, her scholarship placed her at the university and she has enjoyed her time thus far.

“It feels really homey because I saw how UTEP set everything up based off the Bhutanese culture and they did a really good job on the architecture,” said Lhamo, who is one of 30 Bhutanese students at UTEP. “Not many people know that about the architecture. Our mission and our vision is to let people know about the Bhutanese culture and to spread the love.”

The only thing is that while all of these different organizations agree that the region promotes cultural diversity, on a national scale, the country sometimes reflects otherwise.

There are more than a million international students that attend American colleges and universities, and more than 160,000 of them are from India, second only to China with more than 300,000, according to the New York Times.



GABY VELASQUEZ / THE PROSPECTOR
The Bangladeshi Student Association placed first in the food fair and won fan favorite as well.

Recently, Inside Higher Ed did a survey among international students in America and found that there has been a downward trend in enrollments through universities. The survey also indicated that half of the universities saw a 45 percent drop with international enrollment.

“In my opinion, America really resists change,” Lhamo said. “I don’t think learning new cultures will help get rid of the old ones. It helps you meet new people, be diverse. Now, what is America? It’s a fusion of different cultures. Even back home we try to resist change and limit the cultures learned. But I think we should take the good part of each culture that we encounter.”

Carlos De Lara, a member of the Brazilian Culture Center and a junior history major, was born and raised in El Paso but decided to join the organization based on his strong beliefs for cultural diversity. He joined the organization after taking a Portuguese class and also volunteered to help them at the food fair.

He believes that the region’s tolerance to different backgrounds and races should be an example on a national scale of how the rest of the nation should be.

“We have a bunch of different people from all around the world here. El Paso is extremely accepting. I happen to work as an Uber (driver) sometimes and people across the country—across the world—they feel neglected and they come here and they feel a little more heartwarming,” he said. “Me, as a native of El Paso, makes me proud to be here.”

These organizations and others will continue the celebration of the International Culture Festival throughout this week, with events ranging from a bazaar and entertainment to a lecture and film series.

For more information on locations, times and the full event schedule, visit sa.utep.edu/ICF.

Follow Adrian Broadus on Twitter @adrian_broadus

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NOVEMBER 14, 2017

ENTERTAINMENT

EDITOR
EDDIE VELAZQUEZ , 747-7446

The best international restaurants to visit in El Paso



COURTESY OF EL KOQUI DE LA DYER FACEBOOK PAGE
Plantain dish from El Koqui De La Dyer.



COURTESY OF JERUSALEM GRILL FACEBOOK PAGE
Lamb chops entree from Jerusalem Grill.

BY JASON GREEN
The Prospector

One of the best things about living in a city the size of El Paso is the plethora of food options. Of course, we all know that El Paso claims to be the “Mexican food capital of the world,” which has always made me wonder why any place in Mexico wouldn’t claim that title, but I digress. If you tire of the usual, El Paso offers ways to travel the world—culinarily speaking—without leaving the city limits.

In the same family tree as Mexican food, which may help the less intrepid explorers, is the Puerto Rican food served up at El Koqui de la Dyer. The small, family-run restaurant has only been open for about six months, but has already earned a reputation among the Puerto Rican community in El Paso for serving up authentic home-cooked favorites. Mafongo (mashed green plantains with garlic and spices, fried and formed into a ball with chicharrones inside) and churrasco (grilled steak slices) with a side of arroz con gandules (rice with pigeon peas and chunks of pork) fly out the door to feed the vast Fort Bliss and Puerto Rican community, leaving just enough room to sit and enjoy the atmosphere of the cozy “mom and pop” spot.

The Fort Bliss community has also brought other great international eating spots for those willing to make the drive to the Northeast side of town. For those willing to venture away from typical Chinese food, Korean restaurants are plentiful in Northeast El Paso as well, with many soldiers having married Koreans during their time in the service. One of the best of these restaurants is Han II Kwan, also on Dyer Street. The lunch specials are incredibly cheap and the extras make the meal extremely filling. For \$6.99, you can try any number of traditional Korean favorites such as bulgogi (marinated grilled beef) and kal-bi (marinated grilled spare ribs). The hospitality is unlike any other restaurant you may find in El Paso. As soon as you order, you are brought a tasty cabbage soup, a vegetable pancake with a soy/onion dipping sauce and an empty plate. One of the best things about Korean restaurants, is their banchan (small side dishes). Even those not too familiar with Korean food may have heard of kimchi, a spicy, some-

times fermented or “rotten” cabbage. In the case of Han II GwanKwan, it is not rotten, it is just seasoned and spicy. The plate is to help yourself to the small buffet of small dishes full of spicy broccoli, cabbage, hot dogs, seaweed, sweet potatoes and numerous others. One last Army-related restaurant in the Northeast is the Little Bavarian German Restaurant on Hondo Pass. The restaurant is thorough in their German décor, food and beer, and regularly serves the German military personnel stationed at Fort Bliss. Any of the bratwurst, currywurst or schnitzel is authentic and very tasty with a side of sauerkraut and potatoes, but the real value at Little Bavarian is every month or so when the restaurant finds a reason to serve their all-you-can-eat buffet of sausage and schnitzel usually for just \$13.50. Speaking of buffets, this is Texas and it seems that even although some restaurants have come from around the world and settled here, they understand how most Texans prefer to eat. Jerusalem Grill on Mesa Street is doing a bang-up business with their Monday through Friday lunch buffet for the reasonable price of \$12.99. On a recent visit, the restaurant served many Mediterranean dishes

that were both filling and still light and refreshing. A salad of spinach and romaine had a balsamic and basil dressing, but the key was the toasted pine nuts. Dishes on the buffet included an outstanding red vegetable and shrimp curry-like dish, a pasta and chicken dish in white sauce, which was full of flavor, and a grilled burger with olive oil, garlic and cilantro with potatoes—the true star of the buffet. Just a few doors down from the new Jerusalem Grill is another lunch buffet that has been open a little longer, India Palace. Unlike Jerusalem Grill’s buffet, India Palace’s choices change very little from day to day, but with the quality of food that is served—why mess with perfection? Traditional Indian favorites such as tandoori chicken (chicken marinated in yogurt and spices) and pakora (fried vegetable balls) are served every day in the classy, modern restaurant. Do not leave without one—or 15—gulab jaamun, which are small balls of dried milk, fried and soaking in sugar syrup. Save room for these! If one is willing to go outside of the Taco Bell and McDonald’s box or bag and venture into the international

✉ Jason Green may be reached at theprospector@daily.ent@gmail.com.

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The Swell Kids set the record straight on ‘GOOD PROBLEMS: A Collection of Feelings’

BY ADRIAN BROADDUS
The Prospector

Local neo soul duo The Swell Kids, comprised of Eddie Vasquez and Alex Bejarano, recently released a nine-track record titled, “GOOD PROBLEMS: A Collection of Feelings.” These two are known for developing deep house beats with indie and hip-hop influences, which continue to impress the local scene.

The two felt passionate about this album and did a commentary interview about each track on the LP. Below are Eddie’s (E) and Alex’s (A) responses.

Q: First off, you all designed three separate album artworks (possibly more that I didn’t see). Why those album covers and why three different ones?

A: I feel like where music is today, visuals are just as important as the content that’s being created, so it was more of a “why not” for us to create multiple artworks for this project. Plus with the multiple streaming services there are today, we figured we’d try something a little different this time around. Spotify, Apple Music and SoundCloud all have multiple pieces up for your viewing pleasure.

Q: “GOOD PROBLEMS: A Collection of Feelings” is the title of the album, but how can anyone truly have good problems? Why the title name for the album?

E: Good problems is a saying or a phrase that we have within The Swell Kids. It stemmed from many opportunities opening up for us. A lot of doors opened up for us and it became a lot of work and planning and lots of dedication.

We really had to focus and execute all these problems within the opportunities that we had been offered. So these problems were only good problems, and

we were completely grateful for all these problems and opportunities.”

A: I guess the easiest example of a good problem we had would be us getting asked to DJ last year’s Neon Desert VIP lounge a couple days prior to the festival, when we both knew we had work at our day jobs. So trying to convince our managers to give us the days off to play the event was definitely a good problem. It’s a miracle we still have our jobs.

Q: On “Pressure,” the album kicks off with soft keys and eerie beats. What’s the importance of an intro song for an album? How does “Pressure” set the tone for the album?

E: The importance for the intro song is it has to grab the listener. To me, “Pressure” was my favorite song. It spoke so much to me emotionally that I really believe that it was the perfect intro song. This song lets the listeners know that this project was gonna be an emotional one—2017 was an emotional journey for us.

Q: “LA Dreams” sounds almost dreamy, with a strong build up. What was making this song like? It really feels like you’re driving in LA at night, looking at all the surroundings. How much does LA inspire you all?

A: “I’m so glad you said that! That’s the exact vibe we wanted to give out. Whether it’s riding the metro at night, or just cruising downtown at night.

I remember Eddie working on the rough draft of that song while we were driving back to El Paso after one of our trips. LA has opened our eyes and ears to so much. Whether it’s the shows we go to, the food we eat or the boutiques/flea markets we shop at, it is truly the one place we can be ourselves and enjoy all the art that surrounds us.



The Swell Kids, Eddie Vasquez and Alexander Bejarano pose at their “GOOD PROBLEMS” album listening party at the Outpost.

Q: “Control” feels consistent throughout the track except toward the end. What’s this song about?

E: Well, first that interlude in the beginning of the song is JOEY PURP talking to us about him loving El Paso because of the amazing tacos that we have here. We had to keep “Control” short and sweet. The inspiration from that song completely comes from Tyler, the Creator’s new album. We bumped that album throughout California this past summer, and man, that is a great album.

Q: Adding Montzerratt to “Last Call” had an awesome vibe for this album. What’s it like working with his ‘70s-‘80s aesthetic? How did it bounce off with your all’s style?

E: When we do our DJ sets and our live sets, our main goal is to curate a set that will make people dance. Whatever show, we love to dance and we love to see people having fun and just dancing the night away. So we created this song specifically to get people dancing, and we knew right away Montzerratt could bring a funkier vibe to the track. We sent him the track and he sent it back with that funky guitar and synth and it was perfect. Montzerratt is truly one of the most talented artists we’ve ever worked with. That guy is insanely good.

Q: “Rowland Heights” features a lot of twists and changes. What’s this song about? Why those vocals in this song?

Seems like a track on personal reflection. Is that what you were trying to go for?

A: “Rowland Heights” was one of those songs that just felt super catchy when we created the track, but it wasn’t until after the track was released that I felt a deeper connection to it. The vocals on the track repeat “Do you wanna be you?” and this could be me teaching, but sometimes with all that’s going on in our personal lives, sometimes I do ask myself if I really want to be the person I am? Like, after all is said and done, are you happy with the version of who you are right now? I know it’s really deep for a dancey track, but it’s what I felt.

Q: Joining with Irie Lee on “Friends” was a standout on the album. How is he working in the studio? Some beats feel like they’re made for a specific voice. How do you think he was right for this beat?

A: Crazy to think we never stepped foot in a studio together to create that song, yet it has such a personal vibe to it. We love Lee for the person he is, so we knew he’d be a perfect fit for the track. Definitely my favorite track on the project.

Q: Both you and The Fifth Estate have come up together, so to speak, and really made a name for yourselves in El Paso. However, obviously, you guys ride entirely different genre waves. Why collab. with them on “From the 3rd?” Is it El Paso love? Or are you all friends beyond that? How was it working with them?

E: We made this track and it was just sitting on our MacBook and one night we went to Fifth’s house to just kick it and we showed him that song. He vibes with it so much he busted out his trumpet and gave us that beautiful trumpet

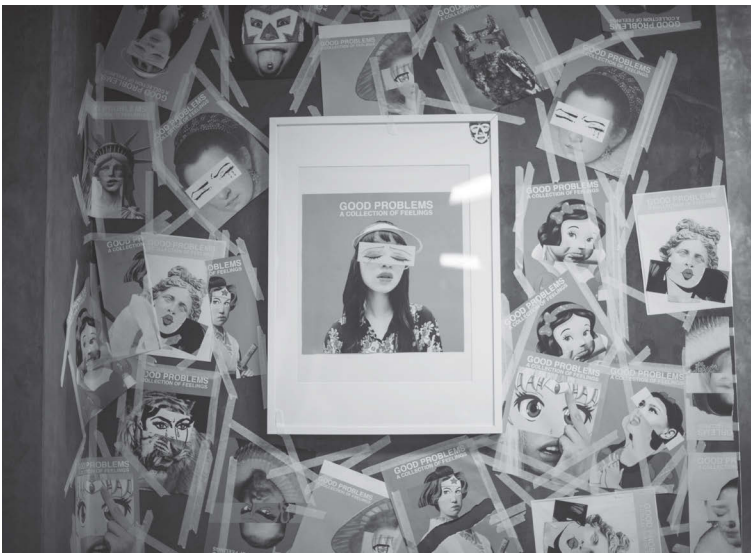
sound. We are friends outside of this music world. We support him and he supports us. The man is a lyrical genius and his vibes are always right.

Q: Like an intro, the outro to an album is always a good way to close off an album soundly. With birds chirping and voiceovers on “Life After,” how does this album come full circle? Or would you say this track is more of a sending forth track to make the listener want more?

E: “Life After” is actually a very sad song. Once we completed the song we had gotten a message that one of our close friend’s mother had just passed away and this song completely matched the feelings we had when we read that message. That’s where the name came from. This track to me is just a reflection of how life can be sometimes. Life can beat you down—2017 has had its ups and downs. It was an emotional journey for me personally. I’m really happy I was able to express those emotions on this project. I’m grateful it’s out and I really hope people can relate to these emotions in one way or another.

A: That song is meant for you to feel something. No matter what the feeling is, it’s meant to move you. The interlude that plays right before that track is actually a sample of our good friend’s (a fellow Swell Kid) baby daughter laughing, so it almost serves as a full circle track with the beginning of new life and the ending of another. The snippet in the song ties into the role, us as creative, have when making our art. No matter how shitty life can be, we have the power to take those feelings and create something moving.

Follow Adrian Broadus on Twitter @adrian_broadus



“GOOD PROBLEMS: A Collection of Feelings” is framed around designs by Adrian Correa.

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NOVEMBER 14, 2017

SPORTS

EDITOR
JEREMY CARRANCO, 747-7446

Men’s basketball set for Puerto Rico Tip-Off tournament



GABY VELASQUEZ / THE PROSPECTOR
The Miners will play three games in four days at the Puerto Rico Tip-Off.

BY MIKE FLORES
The Prospector

The UTEP men’s basketball team will kick off the 2017 Puerto Rico Tip-Off tournament against their old Western Athletic Conference rival Boise State on Thursday, Nov. 16, at noon at the HTC Center in Conway, SC. The game will be televised on ESPN.

The tournament was relocated to South Carolina after the impact of

Hurricane Maria on the Puerto Rico region in late September.

The winner of the Miners (1-0) versus the Broncos (2-0) game will play the winner of last year’s Final Four, South Carolina, or Illinois State on Nov. 17.

The Miners are coming off a 50-point victory over Louisiana College on Friday, Nov. 10, at home. UTEP opened the game with a 32-0 run, putting the game out of reach

early. Junior forward Paul Thomas led the Miners in scoring with 16 points (6-of-7 from the floor) to go along with eight boards. Graduate transfer guard and forward Keith Frazier led the team in rebounds with nine.

Meanwhile, the Broncos scored more than 100 points in their season-opening win just like the Miners did, earning a 104-65 win against Eastern Oregon on the same night (Nov. 10). Sophomore guard Alex Hobbs led Boise State in scoring (21) with a perfect nine-for-nine shooting from the floor.

UTEP and Boise State have met 11 times in their history, with UTEP owning the series lead, 6-5. However, the two teams haven’t matched up since the 2005 WAC Championship game, which resulted in a 91-78 win for the Miners.

Both UTEP and Boise State come into the 2017-18 season with new and inexperienced teams.

Needless to say, Boise State will pose an early season test for a UTEP team that has more newcomers than returners and the same amount of freshman as they do returners.

UTEP’s roster is comprised of eight newcomers—five freshmen—and only five returners from last year’s fourth-seeded Conference USA team that went 15-17 overall

but an impressive 12-6 in Conference USA play.

Nonetheless, out of the five returners for UTEP, four of them were starters on last year’s team, including their leading scorer from last year, guard Omega Harris, who is now a senior, and their two bigs down low in senior center Matt Willms and Thomas.

Boise State is coming off a third-place finish last year in the Mountain West Conference after going 20-12 (12-6 in conference).

Boise State has the Mountain West Preseason Player of the Year and leading scorer (17.4 points per game in 2016-17) from a year ago, guard Chandler Hutchinson. Hutchinson was a first-team All-Conference player last season and has helped lead an offense that averaged 75.1 points per game, and who will be a senior leader for the Broncos this season.

Just like UTEP, who added a gifted graduate transfer in Frazier, the Broncos added two experienced graduate transfers of their own and now have three seniors alongside Hutchinson.

One of their additions comes from Fordham University in Christian Sengfelder—a 6-foot-9, 246-pound player who brings 93 games of experience.

The other grad transfer the Broncos added this offseason is Lexus Williams, who makes for a reliable starter.

Both Sengfelder and Williams being added to the Broncos roster, with a talent like Hutchinson, make Boise State’s inexperience more lethal and raise the potential for a big three.

Also, both teams are trying to fill the shoes of key players departing last year. UTEP is still searching for the point guard position since losing Dominic Artis—UTEP’s leader in both assists (5.8 assists per game) and rebounding (6.5 points per game) last season—while Boise State lost Paris Austin to California. Austin averaged 12.3 points per game and a team-leading 2.8 assists per game.

In the preseason polls, both UTEP and Boise State were projected to finish in the top half of their respected conferences, with Boise State picked to finish third again in the MWC and UTEP picked to finish fifth in C-USA.

UTEP is guaranteed to play three games in the Puerto Rico Tip-Off from Nov. 16 to Nov. 19. The other teams participating in the tournament that the Miners could match-up with in the third game include Iowa State, Appalachian State, Tulsa and Western Michigan.

Follow Mike Flores on Twitter @MikeyTheReal.

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British-born golfer finds success in El Paso



GABY VELASQUEZ / THE PROSPECTOR
Kirklevington, Yarm, native and UTEP junior golfer Lily Downs has eight top-10 finishes the past two seasons.

BY MIKE FLORES

The Prospector

After a strong fall start to the 2017-18 season, Lily Downs is using the winter break part of the schedule to perfect her already talented set of skills.

As a sophomore, Lily Downs led the UTEP golf team in scoring average (75.1), was the Miners' top finisher in four of its 10 tournaments, had five top-10 finishes and was named UTEP team MVP.

"After my freshman year, I told coach 'I'm going to be your MVP next season. I'm going to work hard and get it,'" Downs said. "After I won team MVP my sophomore season, I told myself that absolutely have to get it and for the next three years, too."

As a junior now, the United Kingdom student-athlete seems to be putting actions behind her words and wishes. With a lot to live up to after a breakout sophomore campaign, Downs seems to be better than she ever was now.

Only five tournaments into Downs' junior season and she's already accomplished what some players won't do throughout a whole season. Out of the five team tournaments, Downs has been UTEP's top finisher in three of them, she's finished top 10 in three matches, has four top-20 showings and has the Miners' best finish this season—coming in second overall in the FAU Fall Invitational with her performance of a nine-under-par 135—only two strokes away from topping the tournament winner Worapitcha Anndit (Seminole State).

All of Downs' success in a short amount of time hasn't gone unnoticed. In fact, in Downs' illustrious career, she was named the Conference USA Female Golfer of the Week on Oct. 18, after picking up a pair of top-five finishes at the NMSU Aggie Invitational and at the FAU Fall Invitational the week prior.

But playing at a high level with high success isn't new to Downs. Just where exactly did UTEP find a talent like Downs?

Well, Downs first picked up a golf club when she was 10 years old, when her father, Michael Downs, took her out to a driving range. At the time, Downs had no idea that golf would play such a crucial role in the life she lives.

From that time on that driving range, the rest just came from there for Downs and her golf career.

Prior to UTEP, Downs was a member of the Romanby Golf Club, where she was the junior captain, which included not only much-needed experience for such a young star, but also multiple wins with her club.

Being a winner is something that came early for Downs. She was the ladies' Gross champion four times and the junior Gross champion in 2015. Downs owns the course record at Romanby.

With her impressive resume, Downs' possibility of playing at the next level in college was real.

So more than 5,000 miles away in the city of Kirklevington, Yarm, UK, UTEP found what they were looking for—a golf standout in Downs.

When Downs first arrived in El Paso, she knew UTEP was the next best thing for her young career.

"When I came on my official visit, everything that coach showed me about UTEP was screaming 'yes' to me. The weather was perfect, so I knew that I could play year-round here, which I've never had the opportunity to do back home," Downs said. "I knew UTEP

could be a great opportunity for me, so I took it—I had to."

Nonetheless, with all the changes that come with moving to another country, with no family or friends to lean on, it took some time for Downs to get used to the American lifestyle. Downs had no idea what to expect when it was finally time to leave the UK and come live in Sun City.

"When I got here (El Paso), I was lost. I didn't know what to do. It hit me hard on how different home and here was at first," Downs said. "Coach (Scott Lieberwirth) really helped me transitioning over here. Every problem I had I would ring him. I was like that freshman with every little question."

Over her two and a half years of living in El Paso, the city has really grown on her. In fact, Downs finds herself missing El Paso and wanting to come back when she goes back to the UK for holidays and breaks.

"Over this past summer, I actually told my mom that I couldn't wait to get back to El Paso. I couldn't believe that actually came out when I was back home, but I definitely do see it as my second home," Downs said.

An advantage that El Paso brought to Downs and her game was the change in weather compared to the Romanby fields. While El Paso brings playable weather of warmth and much sunlight, Romanby's weather made it difficult to play outside with colder and wetter weather.

"Usually my season would start in April and we would finish in October at home because those were the only months that the courses would be in decent conditions," Downs said. "So, what I love about here is that you could go outside whenever. I love having that option. I could wake up in the middle of November and go play if I wanted to."

On the field, Downs is all about improving every week both individually and helping her team as a whole get to the top.

"I've done all these tournaments before, so when the younger girls come to me, I give them all my notes on the courses. When the tournaments come around and the freshmen need help with anything, I'm always there to help," Downs said.

From her freshman year to now, Downs' biggest area of growth has been her consistency throughout an entire season. And even with all she's accomplished so far, Downs still sees a lot of room for improvement.

With the spring slate of the season starting back up on Feb. 12 at Texas State, Downs' goals for the remainder of her season is to finish at least one of the tournaments under par, knowing that the spring courses are a lot more challenging. Her biggest goal though is for UTEP to win a tournament as a team and to win the conference championship.

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