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The Prospector, February 20, 2018

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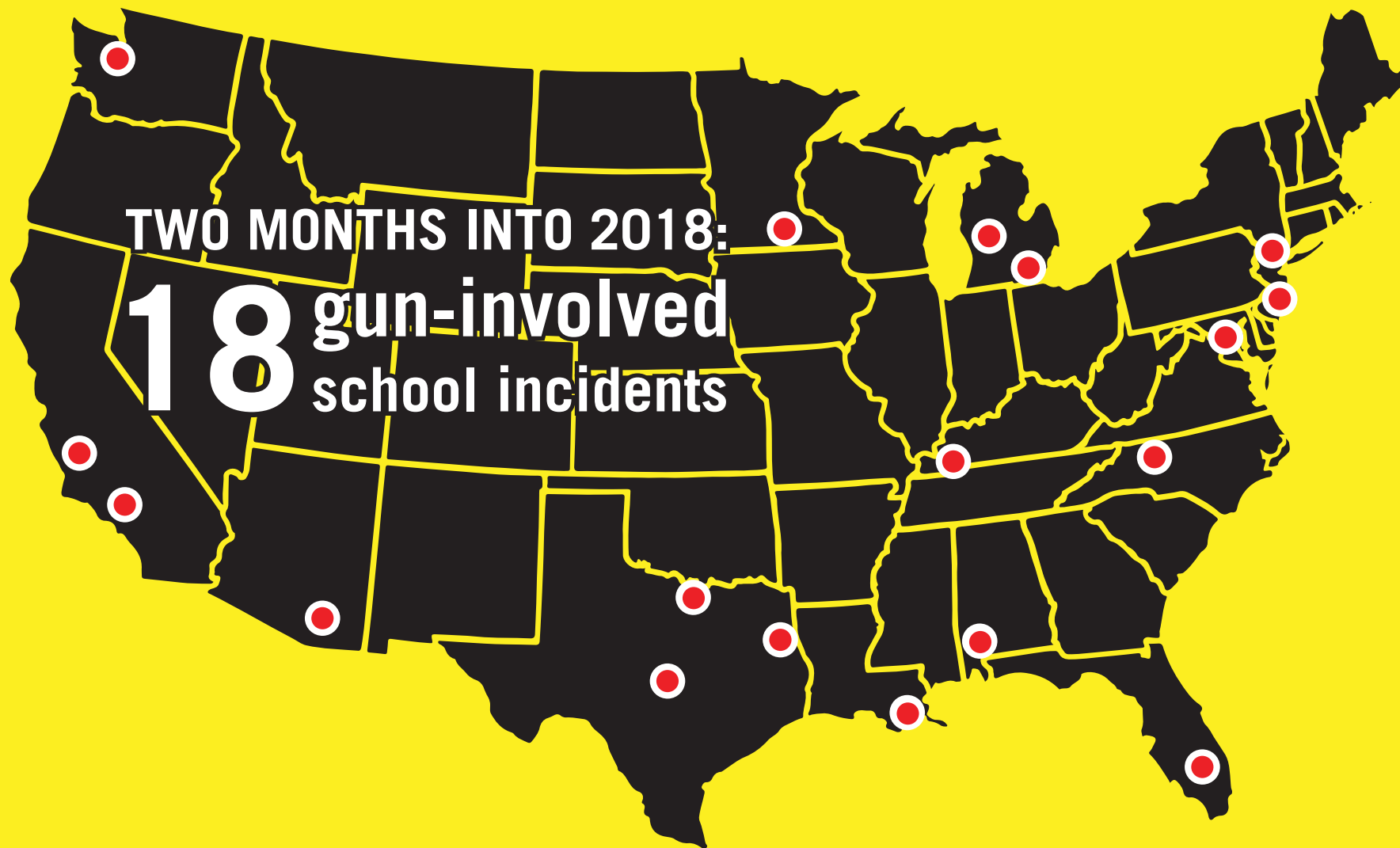
THE PROSPECTOR

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VOL. 103, NO. 20

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO

FEBRUARY 20, 2018



ALEJANDRA GONZÁLEZ/ THE PROSPECTOR

BY MICHAELA ROMÁN AND
CHRISTIAN VASQUEZ

The Prospector

The students of Marjory Stoneman Douglas High have now been added to the list of 150,000 American students who have experienced a mass shooting since the Columbine High School massacre in 1999.

This year, there have been 18 school incidents that have involved guns. While not all shootings involved injuries, they range from suicides, students firing guns into the air and arguments that led to shots fired. Three incidents in Texas, Kentucky and Florida were considered mass shootings. In all, 20 were killed, 21 wounded and two committed suicide.

On the border, city and state representatives are weighing in on where they stand on gun control and mass shootings in schools.

John Cornyn, U.S. Senator (R-Tx)

Last November after the shooting in Sutherland Springs, Texas, it was discovered that the shooter would not have been able to legally purchase the rifle he used if the Air Force had entered a domestic assault conviction into the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS). Sen. Cornyn introduced the Fix NICS Act of 2017 as a response to the perceived gaps in the federal background check database.

"The failure to upload this essential, and required, information in the background check system is simply

unacceptable," Cornyn said in a statement two days before the Parkland, Florida shooting.

Cornyn said that he is open to sitting down with Senator Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., who said at a recent Senate Committee hearing that she was open to working on Cornyn's bill, of which Feinstein is a co-sponsor. She also said that a compromise could be reached on the regulation of bump stocks, which allow firearms to be turned into automatic weapons.

Cornyn's bipartisan bill has not made it past the Senate Judiciary Committee.

On Monday, CNN reported that the military rushed to add 4,000 names to NCIS after the Sutherland Springs shooting. The shooter, who killed 26 people, would have been on that list.

President Donald Trump told Cornyn that he would be open to open to a background check fix.

"While discussions are ongoing and revisions are being considered, the president is supportive of efforts to improve the Federal background check system," said Press Secretary Sarah Sanders in a statement.

Beto O'Rourke, U.S. Representative (D-El Paso) and 2018 Democratic candidate for U.S. Senate

In June of 2016, O'Rourke took part in the nearly 26-hour sit in by House Democrats, in which they tried to force a vote on gun control legislation, following the Orlando massacre.

O'Rourke told the story of his uncle, Raymond O'Rourke, former sheriff's deputy, who he says taught him how to shoot a gun.

"That man loved his guns and cherished the Second Amendment, but that man understood that you can defend the Second Amendment and still make sensible laws to protect lives and improve public safety," O'Rourke also said at the sit in. "The people I represent in El Paso, Texas, understand that, the people in America get that."

Now challenging one of the nation's most prominent Republicans (Ted Cruz) for his Senate seat, the entire state is seeing what he has to say about gun control.

"My thoughts are with the families, the children, the teachers and staff who are surviving this shooting in Parkland. I don't accept this. What we are doing to protect kids, spare families these tragedies, is not enough," O'Rourke said in a tweet on Wednesday following the news of the Parkland, Florida shooting.

On his medium page, a blog site, O'Rourke went on to write, "We can't simply react as though these are natural disasters. In response to a question from the Texas Tribune last year, O'Rourke said he believes in ending the sale of bump stocks.

Ted Cruz, U.S. Senator (R-Tx)

In response to the Florida shooting, Sen. Cruz said that gun control is not the answer during a "Fox and Friends" interview on Thursday.

"I was at the hospital with the victims and the victims' families (in Sutherland), over and over again what they said to me, they said 'gun control is not the answer here,'" Cruz said, recalling the Sutherland Springs shooting when asked about the banning of automatic rifles as a Democratic response to the Florida shooting.

Cruz went on to say the answer is to focus on violent criminals.

After the Sutherland Springs shooting, Cruz said that the shooting should have been stopped because the Obama administration did not report the shooters' convictions.

"That's an endemic problem, it's a problem with the federal government and it's a problem with the state," Cruz said in an interview with "Fox and Friends" in November. "Gun control for felons and fugitives yes, for law abiding citizens no."

Jose Rodriguez, Texas state Senator, District 29

Sen. Rodriguez released a statement in the wake of the shooting saying he is appalled that the NRA and their lobbyists have such a stranglehold on Congress.

"They won't even pass common sense measures that most of us agree on like banning assault rifles and bump stocks or universal background checks. How many lost lives is too many? How many kids have to die? At what point will those in DC and Austin say 'enough is enough' and stand up to the gun industry instead of offering their 'thoughts and prayers?' The same

holds true for the Texas Legislature," Rodriguez said.

In 2015 and 2017, Rodriguez filed legislation to create a lethal violence protective order, which focused on people who have already demonstrated violent behavior or made threats by allowing families and law enforcement to ask a court for a civil order to temporarily reduce that person's access to guns.

"Despite the increasing number of mass shootings taking place in our country and widespread support from organizations like Texas Gun Sense, National Alliance for Mental Illness, League of Women Voters and the Texas Municipal Police Association, my bill (SB 434) didn't even receive a hearing because Senate leaders were unwilling to risk the wrath of the gun lobby," he said.

Incidents at El Paso high schools:

School security at Ysleta High School and Burges High School was increased on Friday over alleged threats. The threats were reported to YISD and EPISD from social media apps according to district officials.

What's next?

Women's March organizers are planning a nationwide student walkout to protest gun violence on March 14.

In El Paso, EPISD is on spring break on March 14, however, the Women's March sector here is organizing a "walk for our lives," walkout on April 20, which is the anniversary of the Columbine High School shooting.

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4843

Not just another mass shooting

BY ELENIE GONZALEZ

The Prospector



I never thought that I would ever have a close connection to one of the worst mass shootings in history. To me though, they're all the worst because one life lost is too many.

My cousin, his girlfriend and their three best friends were all victims in the 2012 Aurora, Colorado, theater shooting. They were sitting in theater No. 9 when the shooter, who I will not name, opened fire among the unsuspecting crowd. My cousin, who was in the second row near the exit, where the shooter would re-enter after arming himself, was shot twice while shielding his girlfriend. The group managed to escape out the same exit while his jammed gun momentarily distracted the gunman.

I'll never forget what I was doing while this was happening.

I was sitting in a hotel room during a vacation watching the scene unfold on live TV. I knew that Aurora was the place where part of my family had lived for most of my life, so I couldn't help but wonder if my cousins were at that midnight showing of "The Dark Knight Rises."

I asked my mom if she thought they could be there, but we both came to the conclusion that they probably wouldn't be at such a late movie.

The next morning, my mom got a call from my aunt informing her that one of my cousins was indeed at the movie, and that he was in surgery while doctors worked to save his life.

I couldn't believe it. I couldn't believe that my younger cousin was a victim of this tragedy and that it was a possibility that he could lose his life at only 20 years old.

Every time news breaks of another mass shooting, my heart sinks, but this past Wednesday, when the latest shooting occurred at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, I felt different. My tears were the same, my heart was broken, but I felt angry more than anything.

Why does this continue to happen? There are many reasons, but it astounds me that lawmakers have literally not taken any progressive action to stop this. At the same time, I'm not surprised that nothing has been done.

It has been inspiring to see the survivors of this latest mass shooting speak up in the wake of this tragedy. If you've been paying attention to the news and social media, you will notice that these kids are furious and they don't seem to be accepting only "thoughts and prayers" sent from the lawmakers and the president.

Students are using Twitter as their medium to communicate their feelings to politicians. Seventeen-year-old student

journalist David Hogg has been speaking to every TV news station to make his thoughts heard.

"Ideas are great, but what's more important is actual action and prudent action, that results in saving children's lives," Hogg said to CNN as he urged Congress to do something.

On Saturday a large group of students, parents and supporters rallied outside the Federal Courthouse in Fort Lauderdale demanding action. The words that came from senior student Emma Gonzalez were some of the most powerful that I've heard. In fact, several other walkouts, sit-ins, protests and rallies are being planned at several high schools across the country in the coming weeks.

As I mentioned before, something about this shooting felt different. Maybe it was the fact that it was probably one of the most documented shootings on social media, which helped open the eyes of the nation. Or maybe it's that fact that these students are not going to just accept what happened to them as normal or something that happens all the time. Something about this feels like maybe, just maybe, the tide will begin to turn.

My cousin went from victim to survivor. His girlfriend, now wife, and their friends made it out alive, though one of his friends had to amputate part of his leg due to his injuries.

They were married exactly one year after the shooting to take back the worst day of their lives. The community of Aurora gathered around the young couple to support them and even helped them pay for most of their wedding with several donations of goods, services, food and even the venue.

I was there to witness and celebrate their union, and I will tell you that it was truly a joyous occasion, though they made sure to remember those who did not make it that night.

Their story was heard all over the news both locally and nationally. It made me proud to see that many knew of their love and devotion. They were never angry that this happened to them and it speaks volumes about the kind of good-hearted people they are. They chose to forgive the gunman and move on with their lives, though they acknowledge that they will never forget the night that truly brought them together.

Mass shootings have become all too common in the U.S., averaging 33,000 lives per year from the right to bare arms, but it's something I truly believe can become less frequent. That's my hope and something I have to believe in because I refuse to let myself become callous to these senseless acts of violence. However, I am realistic in knowing that it's only a matter of time until the next one.

Follow Elenie Gonzalez on Twitter at @eleniegonz

Military weapons are for war, not civilians

BY JASON GREEN

The Prospector



I was a senior in high school in 1999 when the massacre at Columbine High School took place. We were already home from school because of the time difference, I

was on the East Coast, and I remember watching it all unfold on TV.

It seemed at the time like an unbelievable, one-off situation that eventually hijacked my senior year by changing my school from an open campus with lots of freedom for students, to a virtual prison with locked doors, metal detectors and ID badges worn around the necks of every student. To think we actually had the nerve to complain about all of those security measures.

Little did we know that this was the beginning of what would become an al-

most weekly occurrence in America by 2018. It was such a simple time in 1999. We were too worried about Y2K to care about much else, it seemed.

The National Rifle Association (NRA) came out following Columbine and said that all schools should be gun-free zones, and that they were interested in closing the "gun show loophole" that allowed the two shooters to buy weapons without background checks.

Flash forward to 2018. The NRA is no longer interested in gun-free zones, in fact, quite the opposite. Apparently, the only way to stop a school shooting now, or in NRA vice-president Wayne Lapiere's quotes following the massacre of elementary school students in Newtown, Connecticut, is "a good guy with a gun." Instead of having less guns in school, the NRA would like everyone to have them.

As far as the "gun show loophole," well of course it's not closed. That would infringe on the gun-owner's rights—and the school shooter's ability to buy their weapon of choice, or the AR-15.

Semi-automatic weapons played a role in all of the following:

Aurora Movie Theater: Smith & Wesson M&P15 semi-automatic rifle

Orlando PULSE night club: SIG Sauer MCX semi-automatic rifle

Las Vegas concert: 14 different AR-15 type semi-automatic rifles

Sandy Hook Elementary School: Bushmaster XM-15 semi-automatic rifle

Sutherland Springs church: Ruger AR-556 semi-automatic rifle

San Bernardino office: Smith & Wesson M&P15 semi-automatic rifle

Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School: Smith & Wesson M&P15 semi-automatic rifle

When I joined the Army a few months after the Columbine shooting, I was issued my first of many M-16 rifles. I would carry them across continents to do the bidding of our leaders, to defend myself while getting shot at from only feet away – even to kill.

It was never easy, never fun and never glorious, in part, because I was taught see WEAPONS on page 3

The search for solutions in the aftermath

BY ADRIAN BROADDUS

The Prospector



One day I know I'm going to have to tell my children about the Parkland, Florida, shootings.

As I sat in my chair at work on Wednesday

afternoon drinking my second cup of coffee, I got an alert on my watch for a school shooting. It said that there were fatalities and the shooter was in custody.

"Not again," I thought to myself, with my head lowered and my shoulders dropped.

I stopped work and reflected on the previous shootings I've endured during my childhood. I was 9 when I learned about the Columbine shooting, what happened at the school and was given a brief glimpse into the 12 children's lives

who were brutally killed by two teenagers. It was then that I also learned about the Virginia Tech shootings, where the gunman opened fire and murdered 32 people, making it the deadliest school shooting in U.S. history. It was not until I was in high school when the Sandy Hook shooting happened. The gunman in Newtown, Connecticut, killed 20 children, six adults and himself.

But this one hit home for me. Seeing the number turn from "more than 10 fatalities" to 17 confirmed deaths—14 students and three teachers—was heartbreaking.

So, ashamedly, that night I did what I would think a bunch of Americans did and shoved the dark thoughts of 17 innocent lives being killed toward the back of my mind.

But that night I experienced a vivid dream in which I saw a young child, who looked like a younger version of myself, run over to me and shouted, "daddy!" I sprung up from my slumber,

sat in my bed and felt tears run across my cheeks.

To think about the innocent children murdered, who had so much potential to live a full life, to think about my younger sister, who is also in high school, and what I would think if this was at her school, to think about my mother and grandma, who always picked my sister and I up from school, and how they would feel if anything like this happened.

And, to think about my father, who fearlessly teaches every day at an alternative school, where he might encounter a student with the mental instabilities that Nikolas Cruz experienced.

Then it hit me. One day, I might have to drive my future son or daughter to school, drop them off and pray that they're safe from a monstrosity like this.

Is the solution banning guns and making a giant bonfire, where one by one each citizen turns in their firearms? Of course not. Now 241 years into our see SOLUTIONS on page 3

NOW ON SOUNDCLOUD

Podcast player interface for 'The Prospector Sports Weekly Podcast - UTEP QB Kai Locksley'. It shows a progress bar, a play button, and a large 'P' logo with the word 'PROSPECTOR' below it.

Join The Prospector Sports Weekly Podcast as they get to know new UTEP quarterback Kai Locksley to talk about his time as the JUCO Offensive Player of the Year in 2017, his recruiting journey and his time so far with UTEP.

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Professor receives award for her work in LGBT health



SERGIO MUÑOZ / THE PROSPECTOR

Oralia Loza, a professor in public health sciences, teaches her quantitative methods in health sciences class.

BY RENE DELGADILLO

The Prospector

Earlier this month, Oralia Loza, an associate professor in public health sciences, received one of the three 2018 Pillars of Public Health from the city of El Paso for her work and contributions to the LGBT community.

“I was really honored and flattered that they selected the work that we put together to help out the LGBT community,” Loza said.

Before arriving at UTEP in 2010, Loza was working on her joint doctorate in epidemiology and border health with a concentration in HIV, substance use and abuse from the University of California and San Diego State University.

Loza said both of the borders she has been able to work at are different, but that the El Paso border region is integrated and a “true binational borderland area.”

“I thought I knew what the border was like, but it wasn’t until I

got here that I actually really experienced it so I didn’t have a clear vision what being on the border was,” Loza said.

Loza teaches biostatistics and epidemiology, and mentors students in the UTEP Master in Public Health and Interdisciplinary Health Sciences Ph.D. programs.

She is also a member of the LGBT community advisory committee, formed by state Sen. Jose Rodriguez. Loza said that being a member has allowed her to have a better awareness of the different issues affecting the community.

Kylara Leyva, a doctoral student in the College of Health Sciences, said that Loza is a very approachable professor who makes herself available to the needs of the students.

“She tells us exactly what she wants and there is no guessing with her,” Leyva said. “I’ve never felt like a question was dumb in her class because she is really understanding of the fact that

we are all in very different areas of health.”

Loza said that teaching students about the importance of studying undeserved populations is one of the many ways in which students can market themselves when they graduate from college.

“It’s an amazing opportunity to influence the next generation of providers, researchers or people that are going to be working in government agencies, to have an awareness that they might not have unless they were exposed to the work that each one of us does here,” Loza said.

Loza’s research focuses on substance abuse and risk behaviors for HIV, Hepatitis C Virus and other sexually transmitted infections among high-risk populations on the U.S./Mexico border, including transgender women, persons who use drugs and migrants.

Loza is a member of the El Paso Department of Public Health HIV Prevention Program’s Community

Mobilization LGBT Core Team, where she has been working on educating the community to assist in the prevention of HIV.

She said her team started to focus on health in general because they found that there was a need for identifying LGBT-friendly providers.

“Transgender women came across providers that didn’t know how to work with them and who didn’t have the training or, in other cases, the willingness to work

with them,” Loza said. “A lot of it has to do with the stigma that people have against these groups of people.”

Loza teamed up with two graduate students in the Master of Public Health Program to create the Purple Pages of El Paso, a referral list of LGBT-friendly healthcare and social work? Service providers in El Paso.

“It went from being a PDF to becoming a website and we launched the website in 2015,” she said.

Loza said that as result of the stigma against the LGBT community, no local data has been collected to understand the health backgrounds and obstacles that this group has to go through.

“We’re building it—we have partnerships with Texas Tech, who are doing amazing work in training their future physicians on LGBT issues,” Loza said. “I think that I’ve been involved in starting a foundation to allow that kind of research to even happen here. It’s going to take a lot of work and it won’t be easy.”

Loza said that the inspiration behind her research comes from a need to bring awareness on how understudied and undeserved populations are affected in terms of health.

“That comes from having a social justice foundation for the work that I do,” Loza said. “We need to study every group of people to understand the health needs of everyone.”

Follow Rene Delgadillo on twitter @rdelgadillonews

UPCOMING EVENTS

EARLY VOTING CONTINUES THIS WEEK

El Paso early voting for the March 2018 Primary election has commenced and will run until Friday, March 2. Students interested in voting may vote at the El Paso County Courthouse from Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., or at any local voting booth. A student may use either their parent’s address or their college address for voter registration. They may not use student IDs for voting. To check if you are registered to vote, log on to epcountyvotes.com. Election day will be March 6.

PROJECT MOVE 2018

About 1,200 students, faculty and staff are expected to participate in the ninth annual Project MOVE, UTEP’s day of community service, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 24, at 50 sites across El Paso County. The volunteers will clean, build, paint, plant, patch and landscape, among other things. Many of them also will learn about different parts of the community, the nonprofit organizations they are helping and the people that each agency serves. The day will start with a pep rally at Kidd Field at 9 a.m.

POLITICS ON TAP

Women’s March El Paso and Voto Latino are hosting a political trivia and candidate meet and greet on Saturday, Feb. 24 at 3 p.m. at Hope and Anchor. This event is an opportunity to come together to eat, drink and discuss important issues. Unlike forums, candidates will focus on face-to-face conversations with attendees throughout the evening.

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FEBRUARY 20, 2018

ENTERTAINMENT

EDITOR
CLAUDIA FLORES , 747-7446

Metropolitan Opera soprano to perform at UTEP



SPECIAL TO THE PROSPECTOR
Soprano Danielle Talamantes will perform at UTEP on Tuesday, Feb. 20.

BY ELENIE GONZALEZ
The Prospector

It's not every day that an international Metropolitan Opera singer visits UTEP. Soprano Danielle Talamantes will make her debut in the Sun City on Tuesday, Feb. 20, at the Fox Fine Arts Recital Hall, as part of a presentation by El Paso Pro-Musica.

Talamantes will be joined onstage by renowned pianist and composer Henry Dehlinger, and together they will perform selections off their albums, "Heaven and Earth: A Duke Ellington Songbook" and gorgeous Spanish songs featured in their MSR Classics album "Canciones españolas."

Talamantes and Dehlinger have been touring the nation, captivating audiences as they bring the lush music and poetry of Spain to life.

She has performed on stages all over the world and has seen her career take off after selling out Carnegie Hall in a solo recital in 2007. Talamantes has also worked for several institutions including the National Symphony Orchestra, Nashville Symphony Choralis, Seoul Philharmonic, Théâtre du Châtelet in Paris, Trujillo Symphony Orchestra of Peru and The United States Army Chorus.

Although Talamantes has seen success, the pinnacle of her career came after becoming part of the Met-

ropolitan Opera roster in 2011.

The Arlington, Virginia, native was participating in a singing competition in New York and little did she know that the competition would launch her career forward and change her life. An artistic director with the Metropolitan Opera happened to be watching as a judge. Although Talamantes did not walk away with an award, she still walked away with an even better prize, an invitation to audition for the Met.

"At the end of the day, it's not about winning, it's not about money, it's about singing for as many people as you possibly can when you're in that in-between stage of academic training and trying to make it as a professional," Talamantes said.

The opera singer has been part of the roster of Met performers since 2011 after several years of performing worldwide, but did not make her stage debut until 2015 in the production of "Carmen."

This season, Talamantes performed the role of Anna in "Nabucco" and reprised her stage debut role of Frasquita in "Carmen." She just found out that she has been invited back to the Met for next season.

Though it was not on her to-do list, Talamantes is grateful for opportunity to be a part of something so big. She understands that being able to be a part of the Met is beyond special, and did not want to feel that if she never made it to the Met, that she had failed in her career.

"It's a dream. It's an absolute dream come true," Talamantes said. "When

I was invited to join the roster, I was beyond thrilled. It's just an incredible place to work, and I've been there long enough now that it truly does feel like family."

Talamantes recalls the first time she realized what she had accomplished. Her debut with the Met was off-stage and she never quite felt the pressure because of how low-key her performances had been.

When it came time to make her on-stage debut of "Carmen," she didn't have the time to rehearse for a show of that magnitude. After eight days of hurried preparation, the final dress rehearsal ended up being her very first performance onstage in front of a large audience.

She said she remembers thinking, "Oh my gosh, this is the first time I'm actually on stage and it's the final dress rehearsal. This is crazy."

Singing has always been a part of her life. Her mother was a church organist and she has been involved in church choirs and school choirs since she could remember.

Though she had been singing for most of her life, it wasn't until she was getting ready to go to college that Talamantes realized she wanted to pursue singing as her career.

She graduated from Virginia Tech, where she double majored in vocal performance and music education. Talamantes continued to better her voice and career as she went on to obtain her master's degree in vocal performance and vocal pedagogy from Westminster Choir College in Princeton, New Jersey.

Education is something that has always been important to Talamantes, which is why she decided that she would go to college and train in an academic setting.

Being able to visit universities during her recent tour is something Talamantes says is wonderful because she is able to connect with students, experience the culture of the town, and network all while being able to perform.

Talamantes will be in town for a few days following her recital and will give master classes to students at UTEP.

"I'm really looking forward to the food," Talamantes said, while slightly joking, and is also looking forward to meeting the people at UTEP and El Paso.

Felipa Solis, executive director of El Paso Pro-Musica, is excited to have Talamantes visit the campus. She raves about the way in which Talamantes performs, calling her a "Metropolitan Opera extraordinaire."

"It's extremely exciting and she is a whole different realm. The manner in which her performance is presented, is really, truly chamber music," Solis said. "She's truly, truly a remarkable talent."

Tickets for the recital begin at \$5 for students, \$20 for seniors and military and \$25 for adults. The show begins at 5 p.m. at the Fox Fine Arts Recital Hall.

Follow Elenie Gonzalez on Twitter @eleniegonz

Former UTEP art students offer illustration workshop

BY PAULETTE VILLA
The Prospector

Former UTEP art students and partners Raúl Gonzalez (known as Raúl the Third) and Elaine Bay will offer a workshop on campus regarding their collaborative process on how to craft and promote their illustrated books.

The workshop will be held at the Fox Fine Arts 453 drawing classroom on Tuesday, Feb. 20, available for the first 30 students to RSVP by email with professor Terri Bauer.

"Anyone who is interested in illustration (especially relative to book illustration) and the book publishing business, should find the workshop helpful," Bauer said.

Due to limited amount of space in the classroom, the workshop will be available only for those in the art department. Students are expected to bring a sketchbook, pencils and pens and will have time to do hands-on work.

"When you're starting out as an artist, there's a lot of, how in the world do you even make it? How do you get your foot in the door? How do you get published?" Gonzalez said. "I hope the students get from the whole workshop a little glimpse behind the curtain to learn all of the different steps that an artist, author and illustrator has to take to make the books that they see on the bookshelves."

Bay is a multimedia artist, who works from video to printmaking, and gains inspiration from historical

and current events to simply "everything surrounding her."

"I use Adobe Photoshop, Premiere and sometimes html on a Cintiq," Bay said. "I also use various cutting tools, scissors, cameras and will try any kind of paste or gold spray paint available."

Gonzalez has worked as an illustrator with author Cathy Camper on the comic series "Low Riders in Space," winning an Pura Belpré Award from the American Library Association for his work on the second volume of the series. Gonzalez's tools consist of ballpoint pens in the colors red, blue, black and green.

"When I was a kid, I was already pretty sure what I wanted to do with my career at that point," Gonzalez said. "That evolved to wanting to become both a children's book illustrator and a comic book artist."

The couple shares a studio at home in Boston, where they are currently working on comics of "SpongeBob SquarePants," a new line of Versify books curated by Kwame Alexander, and a book called "Vamos, Let's Go" with Houghton Mifflin publishing. The book "Vamos, Let's Go" is written and illustrated by Gonzalez, and the coloring and layout is done by Bay.

"We have formed artist collectives, worked on many graphic art projects, fine art pieces and installations, self-published zines and a kid," Bay said, embracing their son, Raúl the Fourth.

"Raúl was a student of mine in a basic design class, and Elaine was in a basic drawing 2 class that I



VELASQUEZ / THE PROSPECTOR
Raúl Gonzalez, a DoArt alumnus, speaks to drawing students. Gonzalez also hosted one-on-one critiques.

taught," Bauer said. "Elaine spent a lot of time in printmaking, while Raúl was drawing non-stop. They both were totally engaged in their artmaking, passionate, creative and a bit crazy in a fun way."

Before attending UTEP, the couple met in Coronado High School. Gonzalez dropped out of college, while Bay finished her bachelor's degree in printmaking in 1999 with concentrations in sculpture and film.

"I really started to develop as an artist when I followed Elaine to the Boston area," Gonzalez said.

Bay received her master's degree of fine arts from the School of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston.

The last time the couple visited UTEP was two years ago to visit their former professors. Besides the food and the people, both are looking forward seeing those who helped them become the artists they are today.

"We hope to come to El Paso and UTEP this week to just really share our experiences with some of the younger artists," Gonzalez said. "I'm pretty sure are wanting to go out into the world and make the best possible

art they can do one day and return the favor themselves."

A piece of final advice they give to younger artists is to learn as much as they can from every project in order to discover themselves.

"Try not be so quick to define yourself as being only one particular type of artist, and take risks and chances to learn," Gonzalez said.

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MINE TRACKS

Black Panther album showcases the human stories behind the superhero thriller



SPECIAL TO THE PROSPECTOR

BY MICHAELA ROMÁN
The Prospector

The highly anticipated black superhero Marvel film “Black Panther,” has been paired with a compilation album, “Black Panther: The Album (Music From And Inspired By).” Mastered by Kendrick Lamar, the album is a time capsule of some of the biggest names today, up and comers and some not so familiar, but brilliant international voices.

Lamar was approached by director Ryan Coogler to put the album together. Being a visionary in his own character-based personas, such as King Kendrick, King Kunta and Kung Fu Kenny,

it meshes well with their own journeys and destiny.

A superhero soundtrack could not have been better suited than for the king himself, as Lamar appears on each of the album’s 14 songs.

At the start of the film, a mess of orchestrated sounds and brash drums battle an elegant piano melody in the title track “Black Panther.” Lamar asks, “What do you stand for? Are you a king or you jokin? Are you a king or you posin?” over a powerful double bass. This track is used for the film’s first formal battle. Lamar is speaking from the per-

spective of T’Challa, the main character and alter ego of Black Panther.

The soundtrack then transitions to its lead single, “All the Stars,” by Lamar and R&B sensation SZA. This song continues to rise on the charts since its release five weeks before the film. The track is used to describe the romantic tension between exes T’Challa and Nakia. Top Dawg Entertainment (TDE) label mates, Lamar and SZA may have played it safe in this song, but have collaborated several times in the past with songs that have more depth and this surely won’t be the last. They both wrapped up groundbreaking tours and albums within the past year with “Damn” and “Ctrl,” respectively, and are getting ready for a Top Dawg Entertainment’s The Championship Tour starting this May.

Lamar repeatedly asks “Are you on ten yet?” on hard-hitting banger, “X.” ScHoolboy Q, 2 Chainz and South African artist Saudi, answer with their own verses. “On ten” is slang for being amped up and ready for action. Ten also refers to the crossed-arms gesture the Wakandans use in the film to salute each other. Saudi joins three of the best hip-hop artists with his verse, in which he draws comparisons between founding father Ben Franklin and South African leader Nelson Mandela.

El Paso’s golden boy Khalid makes his way onto the fourth track of the album with “The Ways,” featuring Swae Lee. The lyrics “power girl, I really want to know your ways” are sung over a dreamy beat produced by Badbadnotgood. “Power girl” alludes to Nakia, a Wakandan spy sent on missions around the world and the love interest of T’Challa.

Leaving the sappiness, Vince Staples and Yugen Blakrok take the album on

a car-chase, with plenty of thrashing beats and vocal overdubs, in the streets of South Korea on “Opps.” On this track, South African rapper Yugen Blakrok makes reference to funk-rap godmother Millie Jackson and real-life Black Panther Party activist Kathleen Cleaver.

Then, in perhaps the most gripping song on the album, British singer Jorja Smith shines a light on self-doubt and pressure in “I am” over a booming drawn out loop. This is used in the scene where T’Challa is being initiated as king and must face his own doubts and his father’s sacrifice. The track incorporates a lyrical interpolation of Travis Scott’s “Drugs You Should Try It.” The song also talks about moving forward despite barriers.

“Paramedic!” Is a roller coaster masterpiece. Up-and-coming hip-hop collective SOB x RBE connect with Lamar for this aggressive banger. The track finds them firmly asserting they are “heavy in the streets” and dare anyone to disrespect them. When they’re done you “better call a paramedic.”

The unlikely trio of Ab-Soul, Anderson .Paak and James Blake come together for “Bloody Waters.” The song is clearly about water and the beat suitably drips and drops. Blake’s chilling vocal transitions with .Paak’s genius bars make the track one of the strongest on the album.

Jay Rock and Future join Lamar on “King’s Dead.” The track is a chant for a triumphant scene in the film. Within this transfer of power, Black Panther’s kingship is challenged by the main antagonist, Killmonger, to whom Kendrick directly makes reference to by rapping from his perspective. The chanting heard at the end of the song can be heard throughout the movie. This song

is strong and its music video has already reached millions of fans worldwide.

Zacari’s “Redemption” is broken up into two parts. The shortest track on the album, “Redemption Interlude,” is filled with strong vocals over a soft piano. “Redemption” is just what every good album needs; a booty-poppin’ beat, whether you’re in the club or in your car. Durban-born musician Babes Wodumo joins hit-making Zacari for this Afro-beat hit. It’s the perfect song to enter the third act.

“Seasons,” by Mozzy, Sjava and Reason, says, “We go to war for this African blood” in the Zulu language. The solemn track is a mournful, yet festive anthem that showcases the struggles and inequalities of coming from Africa.

In the film, Wakanda prove to be a rich African nation protected by King T’Challa rather than a stereotypical third-world country.

Travis Scott has his turn on the second to last track of the album with “Big Shot.” The track highlights hip-hop flute-crazed beats and is used in another action scene in the film. In this one, the two describe the perks and benefits of having prestige and prosperity.

Finally, “Pray for Me,” featuring the Weeknd, is currently the highest track on the charts. “I fight the world, I fight you, I fight myself, I fight God, just tell me how many burdens left,” lyrically summarizes the takeaways from the film.

Although this is no “Section.80” or “To Pimp a Butterfly,” Lamar proved he’s capable of making a, catchy memorable album that runs alongside the stories and emotions that the characters in the blockbuster hit go through. I give it four out of five stars.

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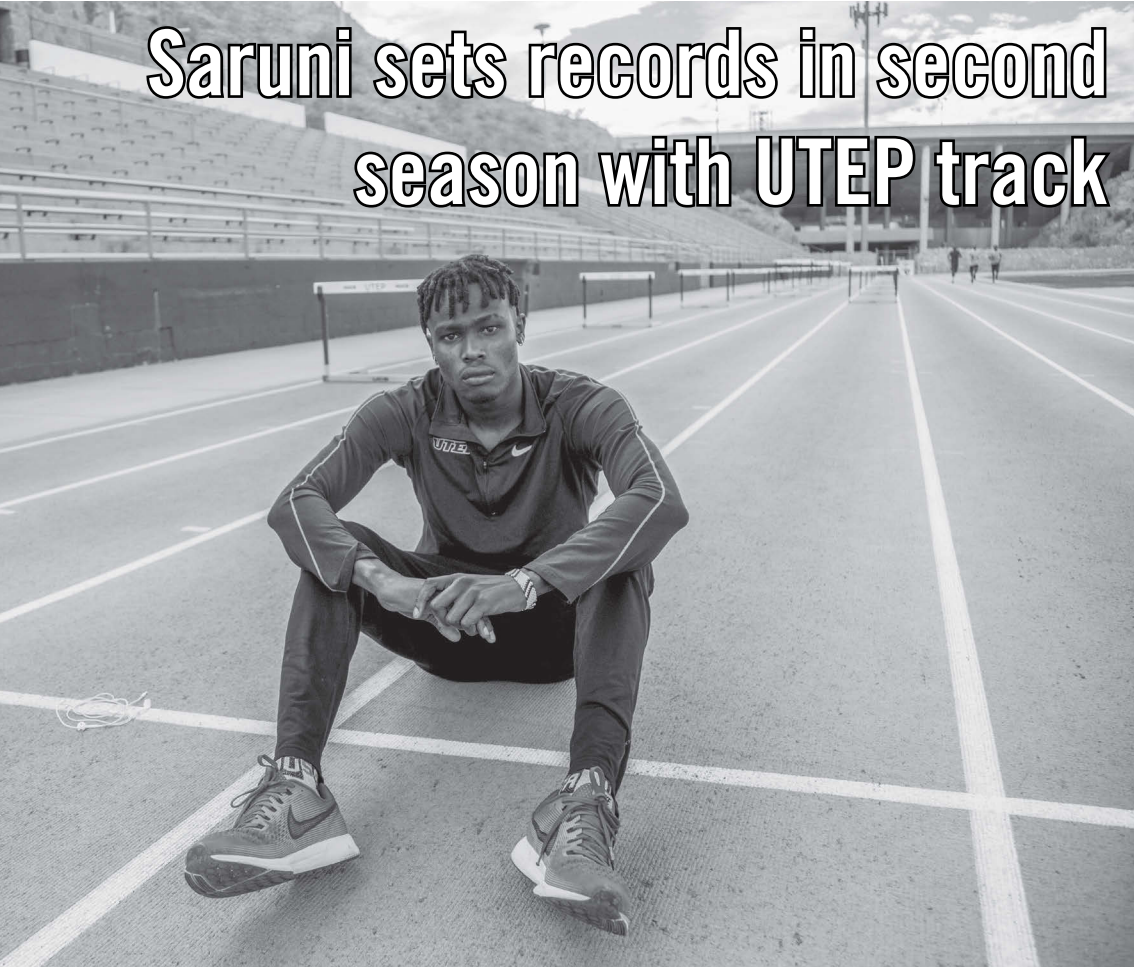




FEBRUARY 20, 2018

SPORTS

EDITOR
JEREMY CARRANCO, 747-7446



MICHAELA ROMÁN / THE PROSPECTOR
Michael Saruni set the world-record in the 600-meter at the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Invitational on Jan. 19 with a time of 1:14.79.

BY DANIEL MENDEZ
The Prospector

As a sophomore, UTEP distance runner Michael Saruni has broken school records and is now looking to be in a league of his own. Saruni is from Ravine, Kenya, and currently holds the school record in the 800-meter rally. He broke the record earlier this year at the Commodore Invitational on Jan. 13 in Nashville, with a time of 1:45.92.

“Everything has been going as planned, I’m just pushing for more,” Saruni said. Paul Ereng, associate head coach for track and field, works with Saruni personally and gets to see what kind of a person he is on a daily basis. From someone who struggled his freshman year getting accustomed to the sport to becoming a record-breaking track athlete as a sophomore, Ereng has seen the transition to a talented athlete in Saruni. “I remembered last year he fell and got DQ (disqualified),” Ereng

said. “But towards the end of the season, he was reaching his best, which means the race was kind of a learning experience for him.” Head coach Mika Laaksonen has also noticed a difference in his high-profile athlete this season. “I think he’s definitely more focused this year,” Laaksonen said. “Freshman year, he didn’t really have it together—he had a rough freshman year. This year he has been on a mission and is very driven.” Saruni has a one-track mind when it comes to this season, from training

with his coaches, to establishing the work needed for this season, as the track season just finished its conference indoor championship meets. “I prepare well. Nothing to fear, just go for it,” Saruni said. Ereng is not only Saruni’s personal coach and mentor, but is also one of his biggest fans. Ereng currently holds the NCAA record in the 800-meter rally with a time of 1:44.84. The record became his sole possession in 1989, and Ereng is ready for it to be Saruni’s one day. “I want that to happen because that record doesn’t do anything to me anymore,” Ereng said. “This is something that I’ve had for 30 years ago, and it was so beneficial for me at that time at the age. When I was running in college it meant a lot of good things for me, but now it is just sitting there as a record, it’s a number, it’s historical and nobody is going to erase that history. But I want him to take it, so he can use it for himself and the good of himself and the institution as well.” Laaksonen anticipates the possibility of Saruni breaking fellow coach Ereng’s record as well. “He’s just a sophomore, so there’s no limit for him. He can probably accomplish whatever he wants to put his mind to in athletics and his event, which is 800,” Laaksonen said. Earlier this year was the first time Saruni attempted breaking the 800-meter record. Saruni was just shy of the record with a time of 1:45.92. He actually had the record in his mind and was determined to get it, but on the verge of nationals, Saruni has just one thing on his mind—the win. “If I could break it—I mean it’s kind of tricky because I feel like I gave it my all—I tried to break it on the first attempt,” Saruni said. “But this time, I’m going for the win. If the record goes, then that’s great for me. Earlier in the season, Saruni set a world-record time of 1:14.79 in the

600-meter at the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Invitational in Albuquerque. “I knew he broke it, so all those numbers are right there, face to face. But the most important thing is I knew for sure—he was going to break the 600,” Ereng said. “The time he performed at Texas Tech was actually very impressive. I didn’t expect him to run that fast by himself, it was very impressive.” Saruni has had the same approach all season, yet eyes the record he wants to beat. “If I feel good before the race, I’m definitely going for it, but I just want the win,” Saruni said. Saruni is a fan of coach Ereng’s aggressive workouts because they get him ready for the meets, but what he values the most is when Ereng offers words of encouragement before a race. “Everybody gets nervous, he (Ereng) just talks to me and I feel comfortable,” Saruni said. Both coaches realize they have a unique talent in their program and the future is bright for Saruni as he gets better every season. “I think it’s good to have these high-profile athletes, I mean it’s good publicity for the program,” Laaksonen said. This past weekend at the C-USA indoor Championship track meet, Saruni finished in second place behind teammate Jonah Koech in the 600-meter. But in the 800-meter, Saruni returned the favor when he finished with gold and Koech finished in second place. “The sport is about talent. When you get this big talent and it is well guided, then things work out,” Ereng said. “They come and go, but that’s the way the sport goes. So, he’s very special. He’s a special guy. This is his time.”

Follow Daniel Mendez on Twitter @dmendez24

Softball opens home slate after hitting stride in Vegas

BY ADRIAN BROADDUS
The Prospector

After an early season rut, the Miners’ softball team (4-6) was able to bounce back midway through the Marucci Desert Classic this past weekend in Las Vegas to win their last three games. The winning spark for the team came just in time as they will host Battle of I-10 rival New Mexico State (3-3) on Tuesday, Feb. 20, and the UTEP Tournament from Friday through Sunday against Portland State (1-3) and Idaho State (0-5) at Helen of Troy Softball Complex. Last Friday, Feb. 16, at the Desert Classic, the Miners had a busy slate with games against Nevada and Boise State, then with a quick turnaround against New Mexico, UNLV and South Dakota on Saturday and Sunday. Nevada went up big with a 6-0 lead in the first four innings, led by Kenzi Goins, who finished 2-for-4, including a two-run home run and five RBIs. The Miners attempted a late comeback, sparked by an RBI in the fifth by Courtney Clayton and a home run in the sixth by Pamala Baber, but it wasn’t enough as they fell 6-2. Although the Miners led 1-0 coming into the fifth inning against Boise State, the Broncos had a huge seven-run fifth inning that capped the game for the Broncos, eventually winning 8-2 over the Miners. UTEP was led by Clayton and Cortney Smith, who each had solo



MICHAELA ROMÁN / THE PROSPECTOR
The UTEP softball team will open their home schedule against NMSU on Tuesday at 6 p.m.

home runs in the fourth and sixth inning, respectively. Needless to say, at 1-6 overall, the Miners were in a must-win situation on Saturday. First on the slate was former Mountain West rivals New Mexico, and the Miners stomped on the Lobos, 8-0. Pitchers Devyn Cretz and Kira McKechnie combined for a no-hitter in the game, while Clayton went a solid 3-for-3 with three runs scored. “It was just a good all-around game and I think some people had good indi-

vidual performances, but I think it was a great team win,” said UTEP head coach Tobin Echo-Hawk in a press release. “It wasn’t one person who did everything, and talking about a no-hitter, two pitchers played a part in that, but we talked a lot yesterday that we are a unit and we’re doing it together.” Then the Miners had a larger task, taking on a six-win UNLV team in their home stadium. Both teams traded blows at the beginning, with UNLV exploding with a four-run fourth inning, and they led 5-3 early on after the fifth.

“I told (the team) to keep fighting,” Echo-Hawk said. “We’re a good team and if you keep fighting, things are going to happen and they did. We put the pressure on them and when you put pressure on other teams, it forces them to make mistakes.” In the sixth, Ariana Valles knocked in a RBI to cut the Rebels’ lead to one. Then, Kaitlin Ryder had a two RBI singles to go-ahead 6-5. An error by UNLV in the seventh resulted in a score. Ariel Blair used a bunt to help Kacey Duffield score, making it 8-5 in favor of UTEP. UNLV tried a late attempt with two runs in the bottom of the seventh, but it wasn’t enough as the Miners prevailed 8-7. “It was a crazy game, but it’s the kind of games you love,” Echo-Hawk said. “It was a battle and I think our kids did a nice job. We went ahead and (UNLV) came back and (UTEP) did a nice job of not giving up, continued to fight and our hitters were on it.” On the last day in the Desert Classic, the Miners found themselves in an early rut against South Dakota, trailing 4-0 at the end of the first, then 5-0 leading into the bottom of the third inning. But the Miners exploded in the bottom of the third, finishing with six runs and taking the 6-5 lead. They added one more run in the bottom of the sixth and held South Dakota scoreless through the last four innings to take the 7-5 win.

“(The team) just kept plugging away,” Echo-Hawk said. “I think with yesterday’s big wins, it gave the team confidence. I didn’t see them panic at all and they have this look of trust in their eyes no matter what was going to happen—we were going to win that game. You just have to love it when a team gets to that point.” Now, the Miners will have to take on a talented Aggies squad on Tuesday evening and five games in three days for the second time beginning on Friday, Feb. 23. NMSU has wins against the likes of Kentucky, who was ranked as high as No. 13, and played No. 1 Oklahoma close, eventually falling 2-0 this past Saturday. They are led by infielder Rachel Rodriguez, who has 10 hits, and also utility player Kelsey Horton, who has two home runs and eight hits. First pitch between the two rivals will start at 6 p.m. On Friday, the Miners will play host for the start of the UTEP Tournament as they take on Portland State at 3:30 p.m. Following that game, they will play Idaho State at 6 p.m. On Saturday, the Miners will take on Idaho State again at 3:30 p.m., followed by a game against Portland State at 6 p.m. They will conclude the tournament against Portland State on Sunday, as the first pitch is slated for 12:30 p.m.

Follow Adrian Broaddus on Twitter @adrian_broaddus

UTEP men’s basketball: Five important notes



GABY VELASQUEZ / THE PROSPECTOR

The UTEP men’s basketball team has not had a losing season at home since the 2002-03 campaign when they finished 5-12.

BY MIKE FLORES
The Prospector

Since the new year began, UTEP has had hopes of turning their season around and clawing their way back to a top-four seed in Conference USA. The team hoped for a repeat of

last year, where the Miners received a first-round bye in the conference tournament after a miraculous mid-season turnaround. Since 2018 started, UTEP has played in 12 games and has only come out victorious in two of those contests. For context, UTEP’s only

win in two months of play came against Florida international on Jan. 13 and their 3-12 record in their last 15 games. In their last game this past Saturday, the Miners were torched 82-33 by Old Dominion on the road. The loss was the second-largest losing margin (49) in school history with the 33 offensive points being the lowest score by any UTEP team since the shot clock era began in 1985-86. Now, UTEP (8-18, 3-11 C-USA) will tangle with La Tech on Thursday, Feb. 22, at 7 p.m. and then they will welcome in Southern Miss on Feb. 24 also at 7 p.m in hopes of trying to get something positive going. Here are five things you need to know about UTEP and what to watch out for in their final homestand of the season:

1. UTEP is barely holding on to the 12th and final playoff spot in C-USA

In Conference USA, 12 of the 14 schools qualify for the conference tournament, and UTEP holds the tiebreaker with Rice for the last seed. Charlotte, with a 1-13 record, sits in

the 14th spot and is the Miners’ only win in their last eight contests. Receiving a conference tournament bid allows teams all around the nation to fight for the biggest goal in college basketball—a shot to make it to the NCAA tournament in March. The Miners are in a seven-year drought when it comes to making the NCAA tournament. One loss from here on out could possibly eliminate UTEP from reaching the C-USA Tournament in Frisco, Texas, beginning March 7. While UTEP has to deal with two quality C-USA teams in La Tech (16-12) and Southern Miss (13-15) this week, the Rice Owls have two very winnable games against Florida Atlantic (11-15) and Florida International (11-16). UTEP’s upcoming opponents, La Tech and Southern Miss, have a combined record of 29-27, compared to the Florida schools’ combined record of 22-31. The part that makes things even more interesting is that UTEP and Rice are set to meet up in Houston on March 1. As of now, both schools are within one game for the last spot in the C-USA tournament, but that could either stay the same or change depending on this week’s games.

2. UTEP has not had a losing record at home since the 2002-03 season

UTEP is known for successfully defending their home court, the Don Haskins Center, no matter how bright or dull a season looks. But this year, the Miners have struggled more than usual in El Paso. In the final home stand of the season, the Miners will have a lot more riding on it than the surface shows. UTEP is not only fighting for a playoff spot, but they are also fighting against their first losing season at home in nearly 15 years. Coming into the final home matchups of the season, UTEP is 7-8 at home and are riding a three-game skid at the Don Haskins Center. And their final two home games of the 2017-18 year are no give-me-games. In fact, both La Tech and Southern Miss have already beaten UTEP this season. Against the Golden Eagles, UTEP suffered a double-digit loss, 85-75, on Jan. 4, in Hattiesburg, Mississippi. Then, on Jan. 6, defensively the Miners gave up a season-high 97 points against the Bulldogs in a loss.

3. The Miners need to improve on ball movement

Out of the 351 basketball schools in the nation, UTEP ranks 338 in assists per game. The Miners’ 10.7 assists per game has also brought them to dead last in C-USA in that category. The trend for any successful basketball team is good ball movement and hitting the open shooters. The five worst teams record-wise in C-USA—Charlotte, Rice, UTEP, FIU and FAU—also hold the bottom-five spots in assists per game, while some of the conference’s best—UAB, Old Dominion and Marshall—are three of the top four spots in the passing category. Since losing Dominic Artis, a seasoned guard who graduated last year, Miners have had trouble replacing what he brought to the program. Last season, Artis averaged a team-high in assists and was second in scoring.

This season, no one on the Miners is averaging two assists per game. Every team in C-USA has at least one player who averages two or more assists, except UTEP. UTEP has leaned on two freshmen, Magee and Evan Gilyard, to control their offense and ball handling, and so far it has been apparent all season that ball movement is a much-needed improvement for them along with the rest of the squad.

4. The second-half woes for the Miners need to come to an end

When UTEP is defending near their bench in the first half of games, they play solid defense. But when it’s time to switch sides and they have to defend away from interim head coach Phil Johnson and the rest of his crew, the Miners fall apart defensively. This season, UTEP has given up more than 144 points from the first half compared to the second half of play. In the first half, UTEP’s defense has given up 862 total points, but has given up 1006 points in the final half. UTEP has gained first-half leads over teams like Western Kentucky, UTSA, FIU and North Texas this season, but they resulted in losses. “Another second-half problem tonight,” Johnson said after a routine second-half meltdown against WKU on Feb. 1. “At halftime, I thought we were going to win, but we went back to being reckless.”

5. UTEP needs consistency on the scoring end

One could argue that UTEP’s biggest problem this year is on the offensive side of the ball. While on the defensive end, they are allowing 71.8 points per game. However on offense, UTEP is only averaging more points than Rice this season. Putting up 67 points per game is only part of the bigger problem for the Miners. Last year, Harris was putting up over 17 points per game and his reliable scoring landed him a spot on C-USA’s All second team. But this year, Harris’ shooting hasn’t found the rhythm he had last season. Harris and Keith Frazier are still leading UTEP, averaging 11 points per game, but that’s not cutting it. In C-USA, Harris and Frazier are not even in the top-30 in scoring averages per contest.

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