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# The Prospector, January 22, 2019

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# Tornillo tent city finally closed



BY CLAUDIA FLORES

The Prospector

This past summer I had the chance to cover one of the events that caught the world's attention: the Tornillo Tent City.

Last week it was announced that the center closed its doors after releasing the last child in the detention center.

During my time at The Prospector, I've had the opportunity to cover different types of events whether it's news, entertainment or sports, but the situation at Tornillo has been by far the most powerful event I have covered.

In June, the Trump administration built a detention center for immigrant children in Tornillo, which is located 40 miles away from El Paso.

At the beginning of June, close to 300 minors were in detention, and during the last seven months the center held more than 3,000 children and adolescents as part of Trump's "zero tolerance" policy.

During one of the protests at Tornillo, I had the chance to cross to the Mexican side of the border and stand next to the fence that separates the U.S. and Mexico. From there I could see the tents the American government had built for the thousands of kids separated from their parents.

It seemed unreal, not only to me but to much of the world.

At the protests I could feel the anger of the people as they held posters with the phrase "Free the Children Now," and regardless of how much I wanted to join the rest of the people I was there to simply do my job.

One of the main protests took place outside the office of the Border Patrol and as all the people were outside yelling and shouting against the detention center, some Border Patrol agents appeared on the roof of one of the buildings with a camera and started to take photos of the people shouting.

The people went crazy, and to be honest, I couldn't believe it either. They were taking photos of people shouting at them as if they were mocking them. I understand it was not their fault and Border

Patrol agents were only following orders from their superiors but having them on a roof taking photos of people simply added more salt to the wound.

Attending press conferences to hear parents of the detained children talk was heartbreaking, as I would see them with ankle monitors and breaking into tears as they spoke about how the Border Patrol agents took their children away.

I remember the case of a woman who said they took away her child while he/she was sleeping, she couldn't say goodbye, and the next thing the child woke up to was being miles away from his/her mother.

I remember, I would go home everyday and tell my family about what I had covered, what I heard at the conferences and I would show them the footage and photos we took. The look in their eyes showed distress and some tears every now and then.

This was probably one of the ugliest chapters of the Trump administration to date, however, even when I hated the situation at Tornillo and what the government put thousands of children and families through, I have to say that for me as a journalist it was one of the most exciting experiences of my career so far.

Having the chance to be next to other national media outlets in Tornillo and press conferences covering that one story for the university's student publication was simply sensational.

I not only got to cover the stories, but I also had the opportunity to learn more about immigration. Living in a border area like Juárez and El Paso is crucial to know as much as we can about immigration policies and how they have an impact our community.

The Trump administration has been controversial from the very start and remains so with the partial government shutdown that has now become the longest shutdown in U.S. history.

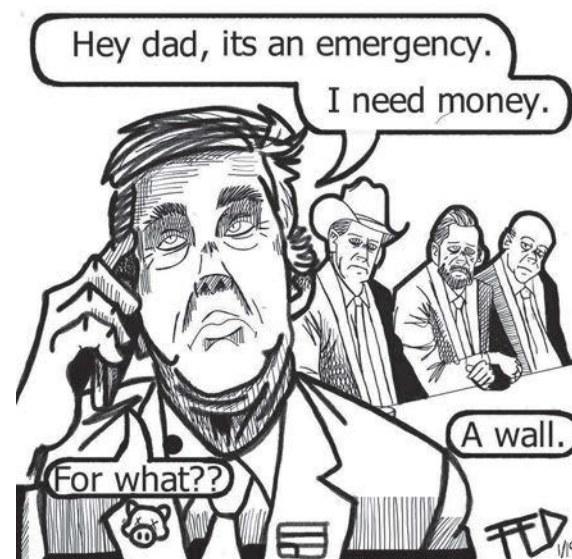
However, even when it took the administration more than seven months to close the detention center, I'm relieved this small chapter is over.

I'm glad to know that those children were released after several months of being separated from their families and that there will be no more family separation.

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## Let's Chica Chat: A new space for entrepreneur women in El Paso

BY GLENDA AVALOS

The Prospector

On Thursday, Jan. 10, women from the local organization "Let's Chica Chat" held their first gathering where more than 80 women attended.

The organization focuses on bringing together female entrepreneurs who want to make a change in their own community through networking and by encouraging other women to fend for themselves or to follow their dreams in the business area.

The idea of Let's Chica Chat came from the inspiration of a book named "What A Party" where at the end of the book the author asks "What are you doing to improve your community?" The idea models similar groups from bigger cities such as Austin and Los Angeles.

For the creators of Chica Chat, it was important to find the proper name for their company that would help them to transmit their inspirational message to the women of the community.

Zoë Gemoets, president of Chica Chat and UTEP alumna said she felt a little lost about what she wanted to do for a long time. However, she felt El Paso needed a place for women to learn about supporting each other in order to be successful.

"I think as women we are very differ-



PHOTO COURTESY OF LET'S CHICA CHAT

Let's Chica Chat is a new organization that focuses on helping women to succeed as entrepreneurs.

ent, but I feel that just makes us stronger. Instead of putting each other down, just be that kind of girl that helps each other out if you know someone that can help someone else," said Gemoets.

The members of the organization want to continue with this project and walk with the women of El Paso to help them and motivate them to follow their dreams.

Elizabeth Amaro, multimedia journalist and UTEP alumna, was part of the first gathering. She said that being part of Let's

Chica Chat was inspiring and an amazing networking opportunity. She met many women that have a business and talking to all of them inspired her to one day open a business of her own. In the future she is looking forward to work with Let's Chica Chat in order to build her own business.

The organization plans to offer workshops, talks, networking events and service referrals for the El Paso community.

The workshops include activities and mini-lectures on how to create a logo, or

how to look for promoters to grow a business.

The goal of the nonprofit organization is not only to create a space for women to support each other, but to help them take the first step to become an inspiration for other women in the business industry of the border region.

Anais Chavira secretary of the organization, said that last semester during the last two weeks of school her professor brought different entrepreneurs to speak, but she noticed all the speakers were only men.

Let's Chica Chat will offer monthly forums for women from all ages in the community. For more information, visit its Instagram @LetsChicaChat.

Glenda Avalos may be reached at [theprospector1@gmail.com](mailto:theprospector1@gmail.com).

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# Hundreds gather for third annual Women's March in Downtown El Paso



ARIADNA GONZALEZ / THE PROSPECTOR

On Saturday Jan. 19 hundreds gathered at San Jacinto Plaza to celebrate the Women's March.

BY ALEXIA NAVA

The Prospector

The third annual Women's March took place at San Jacinto Plaza in downtown El Paso, Saturday Jan. 19. The event held close to 600 people and featured music, poetry, speeches and demands of the El Paso citizens to the federal government.

"The theme this year for the National (march) is 'Women's Wave.' It's talking about how there's been a huge women's wave in politics as far as how many women have gotten elected, and there's been a lot of

firsts," said Raneem Karboji, current UTEP nursing student and senator for SGA, who has been part of the march's organizing committee for two years.

Karboji was also one of the speakers for the march. She spoke of empowerment for women, Muslims and about how she experienced life in El Paso as a Muslim Latina.

"So the main thing here is to keep people engaged and still interested in voting-especially women- and encouraging women to run for public office to bridge the gender gap," Karboji said.

Another participant in this event was Shaka

Toki local musician Angélica Tinajero, who had the opportunity to perform some of her pieces at the march.

"One of them is called 'Amor, Amor, Amor,' and it's about getting everybody to feel that love and that unity," Tinajero said. "The second song, was actually requested by the march organizers, is called 'Chicana.' And that one I wrote for all the women in El Paso who illuminate this city with their love and their nurturing and their life-giving."

As a female musician, Tinajero said the march empowers change because it helps to inspire other women in the community to learn from each other.

"Hearing some of the women speak today inspired me to say, 'Hey, you know what? You know, even though as a female musician, I come into a lot of issues with my male musician partners, co-workers' So this inspires me to just keep pushing it," Tinajero said.

Another speaker at the march was Veronica Escobar, congressional representative for Texas' 16th district. In her speech, she spoke against the current government shutdown and how she is willing to make the people's voice heard in congress and how she is willing to be held accountable by the people.

"The march is near and dear to my heart. I participated in every single one since their inception," Escobar said. "I think it's very important, more than ever, for women to be in the leadership table and for women to be making demands like they made today

of their government and their leaders.

"We are living during a very precarious time when there is an erosion of voting rights, civil rights, abuses of immigrants and the most vulnerable, erosion in health care. So there's a lot at stake for all of us, our children, our grandchildren. There's no one better to be fighting for our important values that we share than women."

In the crowd was former congressman Beto O'Rourke, who came with his wife and three children to support the cause. He noted that there is strong leadership in the youth and females of El Paso.

"(The march) shows them that it's up to us, the things that matter most are, you know, within our power to decide. You see that in the power of people out here," O'Rourke said.

The stronger themes presented at the march were ones of power for minorities, immigrants and for people to raise their voices in this democracy so that, eventually, the desired change will come.

"I think the Women's March is important in generating energy. And that energy, as I mentioned on the stage, has to be translated into action. And so, it means voting, it means canvassing, it means running for office," said Escobar. "Because the March alone doesn't change things, it's building up the energy and momentum to creating long term change."

Alexia Nava may be reached at [theprospector1@gmail.com](mailto:theprospector1@gmail.com)

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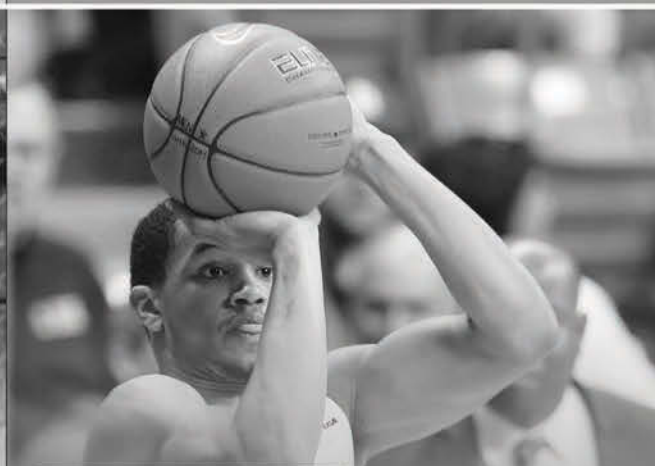
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# Welcome back Miners, UTEP is now an R1 top-tier University



GABY VELASQUEZ / THE PROSPECTOR

Laura Elodia O'Dell is one of many professors to contribute to UTEP's doctoral program.

## BY DANIEL MENDEZ

The Prospector

While students, faculty and staff were away for the winter break, The University of Texas at El Paso reached a prestigious milestone by becoming a tier-one research institution after a decades-long pursuit.

UTEP attained the coveted R1 designation in the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education, the university announced on Wednesday, Jan. 9.

UTEP became one of 130 top-tier universities, among the 2,883 four-year higher education institutions across the U.S. to earn the prestigious R1 distinction, joining the ranks of such universities like Stanford, M.I.T., Michigan, Arizona, and California-Berkeley. According to the announcement only 4.5 percent of the universities have the designation.

UTEP has become the ninth university in the state of Texas with this recognition and is the only R1-status university along the Texas-Mexico border.

President Dr. Diana Natalicio envisioned UTEP obtaining this status of higher education when she first became president of the university 30 years ago with her commitment to access and excellence.

"It is something we have been working toward ever since we articulated our access and excellence mission," Natalicio said during the announcement. "We understood the only way to get the respect of the higher education community was to move up in the Carnegie rankings."

There are several highways a university can take to reach top-tier research status, one being the R1 designation by Carnegie.

As UTEP reached this milestone for research, UTEP professors, like Associate Professor of psychology Laura Elodia O'Dell can't help but feel validated that her fellow colleagues and her hard work have paid off for the university, but she said there's still so much to do.

"I know that there were criteria that were laid out for us to meet in order to be considered tier one and one of those was fi-

nancial, and I have had funded grants that I would hope to contribute to that number that we reached," O'Dell said.

"I also think that tier-one is about creating a certain type of environment. I would hope that I have contributed to creating that

environment. I also believe we still have a long way to go in a lot of areas, and I'm part of the process. I'm committed to UTEP, to make it really feel like a research one environment. There's still some learning that we have to do."

Since Natalicio became president in 1988, the university's research expenditures have grown from \$6 million to \$95 million and doctoral programs have grown from one to 22.

Professor Thenral Mangadu of the Department of Public Health Sciences views the recognition as a time for celebration.

"It's an achievement and it's very well-deserved, especially because of our unique mission of access and excellence," Mangadu said. "That characteristic makes (the achievement) more celebrated for us."

"It's definitely sustaining. When we apply for grant funding, this will be an asset. But it is all because of the innovative and groundbreaking research, we've been able to do in this region at the same time, not compromising on access."

Daniel Mendez may be reached at [theprospector1@gmail.com](mailto:theprospector1@gmail.com).

“

It is something we have been working toward ever since we articulated our access and excellence mission

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- DR. DIANA NATALICIO

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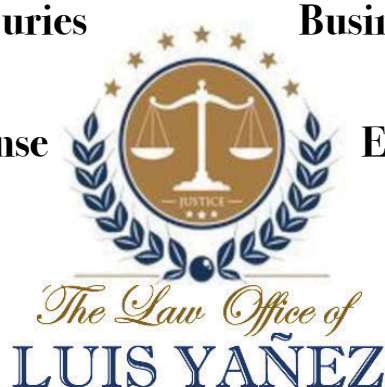
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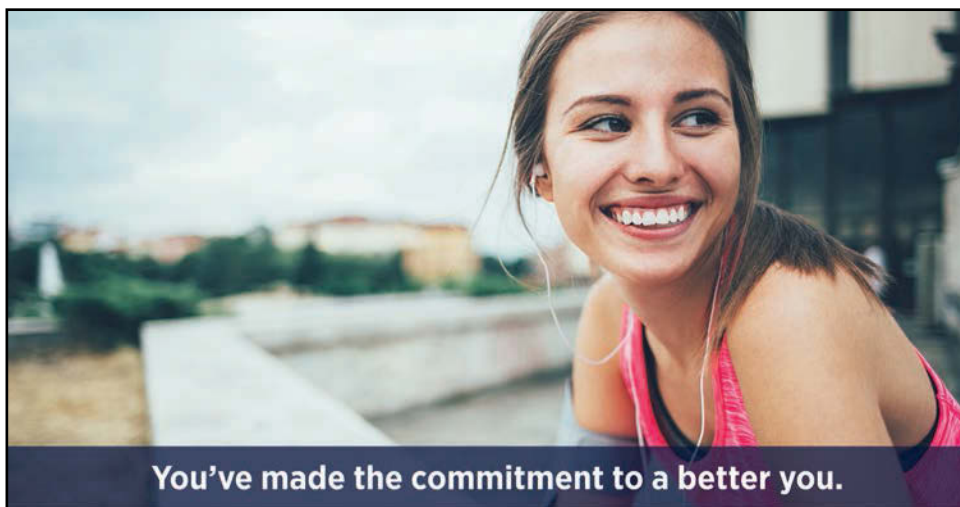
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# UTEP housing and residence life looking to improve in the new year

BY BRIANNA CHAVEZ

The Prospector

Slight changes have been made this spring semester in the UTEP Housing and Residence Life department on campus.

The official office for the department has moved to Boquillas Hall in Miner Canyon. The office was previously housed in Miner Village.

The administrative team for the department moved their offices to Miner Canyon to have a more centralized office.

According to Associate Vice President and Dean of Students Dr. Catie McCorry Andalis, the administrative team for the department has been spread out across the UTEP campus for some time.

"We moved the administrative unit to Miner Canyon so they could all be in one location and work more effectively and efficiently together and support the students' needs," McCorry Andalis said.

However, each housing property will still have a full-time professional coordinator.

"You want your administrative team in one place, so they're all on the same page," McCorry Andalis said.

Senior civil engineering major and Resident Assistant, Alex Rodriguez, never noticed any dysfunction within the department but noted that the move is a good thing for the staff and students.

"It makes things easier for residents, resident assistants and the staff because everyone is together so things are more organized and in case any problems happen the staff can get together and address them quickly," Rodriguez said.

McCorry Andalis noted that the cen-

tralized office allows different teams within the department to communicate more effectively.

"The administrative maintenance side of house is directly impacted by the residence side of the house, and so for them to work more closely together, that's a win-win for the students," she said.

Last semester, UTEP hired Victoria Suttmiller as the executive director for the department who, according to McCorry Andalis, is nationally known for her work.

"I'm very pleased that we have a new leadership team. (Suttmiller) is already bringing some wonderful ideas about programming models and enhancements for academic success that are slowly being rolled out," she said.

UTEP houses nearly 1,000 students on campus and can expect day-to-day operations to go more smoothly this semester.

Another improvement for student residents is weekly programs, which aim at helping them learn useful skills such as time management, money management and even cooking classes. Programs for student residents will now be once a week on the same day.

Senior multimedia journalism major and Resident Assistant Leslie Sariñana told The Prospector programs are a big part of community building on campus.

"This change is going to improve our programs since we're shifting our focus and resources to making them even better as opposed to before when we had multiple programs a week at different times," Sariñana said. "(Programs) are one of the things that make us stand out from off-campus housing choices."

The move will also allow a strategic future growth of the north end of campus, which is where Miner Canyon and the recreation center are located.

"So as we look toward the north end of campus, (we will be) much more intentional about that relationship and collaboration," McCorry Andalis said.

As for why students should choose to live on campus, freshman rehabilitation sciences major and resident Ariana Ibarbo said, it's just much more practical.

"It's more convenient because you're closer to your classes, closer to the library and if you forget something you can go back to your dorm really fast rather than drive home," Ibarbo said.

Rodriguez stated that living on campus maximizes the college experience.

"Students that live on campus get the benefits of having an RA who can help as guidance, and help them learn about on campus resources," Rodriguez said.

McCorry Andalis pointed to research that says students who live on campus perform better.

"Students who live on campus have had a 3.0 or higher and that's because they have direct access to all the support that they need to be successful," McCorry Andalis said. "(As a resident) you're meeting people who come from some country far away, or another part of El Paso, for example, that you just ever interacted with and that's an amazing journey and just really helps your own development as a person."

Brianna Chavez may be reached at theprospector1@gmail.com.

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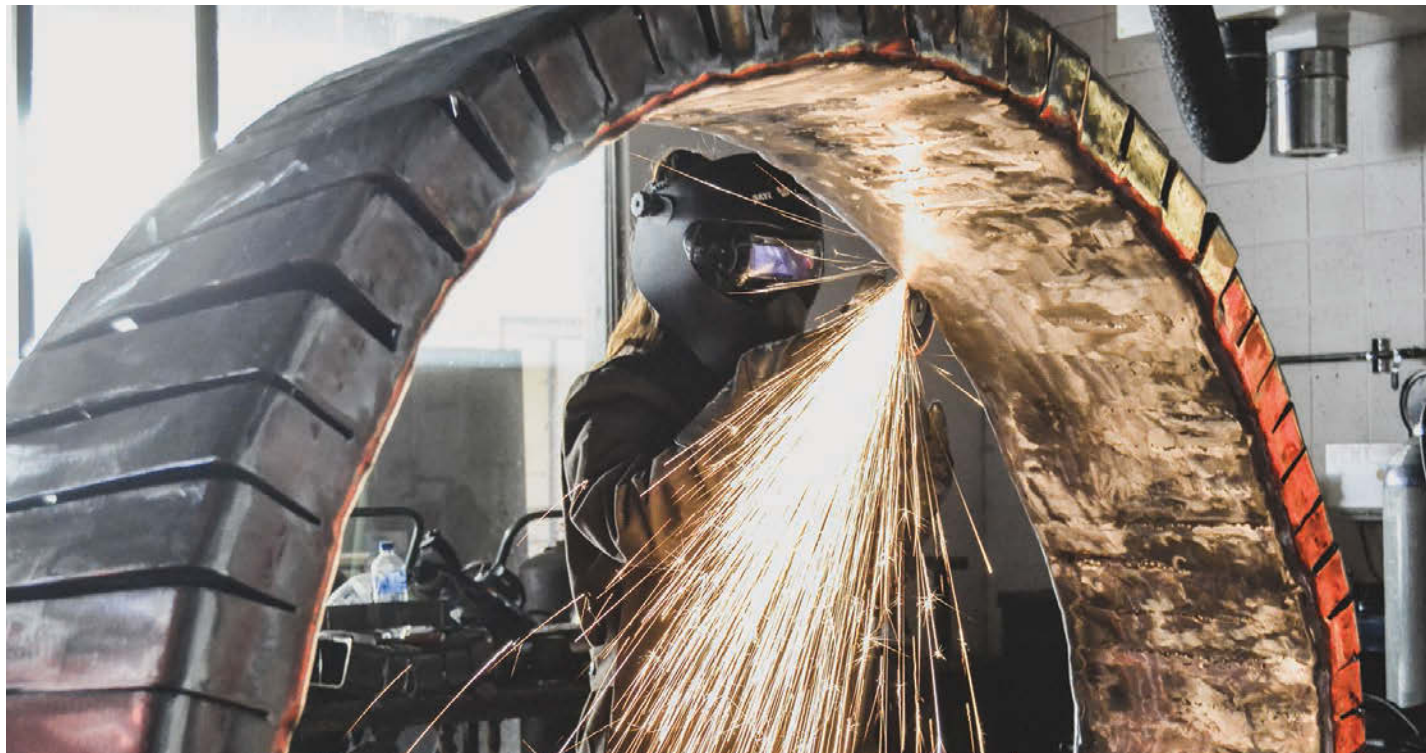


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## UTEP student's Rim Road sculpture ready for installation this week



JACQUELINE MARTINEZ / THE PROSPECTOR

UTEP senior and graphic design major Denisse Ortega works on "The Rim," a new sculpture to be installed Jan. 23 at the Rim Road and Hague Road roundabout.

### BY JACQUELINE MARTINEZ

The Prospector

"The Rim," a steel sculpture created by UTEP senior and graphic design major Denisse Ortega, is set to be installed on Jan. 23 during a ribbon cutting ceremony at 11 a.m. at the Rim Road and Hauge Road roundabout.

The Rim Road Area Association (RANA) selected Ortega's sculpture maquette among nine other student proposals for a public art project, at the roundabout at Rim and Hague Roads.

RANA collaborated with David Griffin, professor and chair of UTEP's Department of Art, and Assistant Sculpture Professor J. Angel Cabrales to create a sculpture for the roundabout. Where RANA Vice President Suzanne Dipp met with the students and provided a brief presentation on the neighborhood's his-

tory at the roundabout.

Ortega has been working on this sculpture for about four months, continuously, with the help of Cabrales and her fellow classmates.

"It's been such a crazy experience but I've learned and grown so much through this," said Ortega.

Ortega and Cabrales sat down with The Prospector to discuss the project.

#### Denisse Ortega

**Q: What inspired you in creating the concept of your design?**

A: The history about Rim Road. Before Rim Road, there was a flood so the land was bought, from there 75 houses were built. My piece has 75 windows to represent those houses that were built and it's a rim because of Rim Road, play-on words."

**Q: What are the technical aspects of your sculpture and what materials were used in**

**creating this project?**

A: It's all steel, I used about 24 feet of rectangular tubing and the saw, along with all the grinding tools, the cutting disk, welding machine and patina to finish off."

**Q: What was the biggest challenge you faced when creating the sculpture?**

A: How long it has taken. I didn't have a team starting off so I didn't know how to problem solve on my own and I had to seek out help.

**Q: How long have you been working on the sculpture?**

A: I've been at this for four months and it was supposed to take one month, but it was unrealistic, based on how big it was. So, we got the extension. They gave us an extra month. I'm so happy and so proud to finally have 'The Rim' up.

**Q: What is your professional goal?**

A: I would like to continue making public art.

#### J. Angel Cabrales

**Q: How far has Denisse progressed as an artist and a student?**

A: Denisse is a student who brings a lot of energy to the studio. She's the one who made "Running in the Night," our theme song in sculpture because she would always ask for us to play it and then after that everybody started loving that song. As for her development, she's come really far, especially with this program. You can see the development in her welding technique, her critical way of thinking and problem solving. It's really made her step forward and take leadership roles. I'm really proud of her.

**Q: How was Denisse chosen to design the sculpture for the roundabout?**

A: We had a committee. Each student gave their proposal to the committee and presented their maquette. In the end the committee voted, and (Ortega's) was selected. She did her research into the history on Rim Road, and looked into Mr. Storms, who owned the property, and how he helped people that had lost their homes in the flooding of the Rio Grande. She's referencing the houses that were built out of the kindness of Mr. Storms. It's a nice, contemporary representation of the history of El Paso in that area.

**Q: Who will benefit from this project?**

A: Students and the City of El Paso and pretty much everyone that goes and looks at it because when you look at it you are going to wonder what it's about. People can talk about the history within it; the students will learn. Well she learned quite a lot from it. The program itself gives the experience that artists need to get into the public arts, so that we can have more well-rounded students, when it comes to making art work.

**Q: What role do you think the artist has in society?**

A: We create dialogue and conversation in areas people sometimes don't even think about. The role of the artists is to really make people think, not to just look at something as a thing of beauty but why is there or why am I here.

Jaqueline Martinez may be reached at theprospector1@gmail.com



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**GO MINERS!**



THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO

THEPROSPECTOR

## El Paso Media Fest enriches aspiring filmmakers



BY ARIADNA GONZALEZ

The Prospector

Organizers of El Paso Media Fest, a three-day film festival held Jan. 18-20, at the AMC 16 Theater, dedicated a few days to enrich the El Paso community through international exposure of culture and film.

A total of 157 films were submitted by artists from around the world, and 38 of the best films were selected to be screened.

"The reason why we wanted to launch the El Paso Media Fest was to give local and regional film directors the opportunity to showcase their work at an international stage," said Diego Valdez, festival co-director/marketing director.

El Paso Media Fest also offered educational panels that taught aspiring filmmakers how to properly emerge themselves into the world of film, how to market themselves and how to use a variety of equipment.

El Paso Media Fest showcased special guests such as Fred Lahne (WB's "Supernatural"), Julian Bonfigio (AMC, "Better Call Saul"), Kent Kirkpatrick (AMC, "Better Call Saul"), and Octavio Solis (Cultural consultant, Pixar's "Coco") to further inspire young El Paso filmmakers.

"One of the biggest celebrities that we brought down was Fred Lahne. Lahne has come out in 'The Greatest Showman' which is a Hollywood film he also came out in 'The Dark Knight Rises' and also played one of his biggest roles in 'Supernatural,'" Valdez said.

"We had one of our students with a VIP badge, who started breaking down in tears because that's her favorite show. She would've never in a million years thought she would have met him, so we're creating new memories, we're creating new experiences."

All three days of the El Paso Media Fest were fun-filled and educational for future filmmakers, participating filmmakers and community members. They were given the opportunity to network with local talent and filmmaking pros, learn from industry members and develop themselves further in the world of film.

El Paso Media Fest staff and special guests were able to meet and talk with others network and connect with others for future projects.

"We are giving them the opportunity to learn how to tell a great story. We have so many great stories here in El Paso especially with our culture, where we're located. A lot of filmmakers feel like they're not good enough or that they don't have the right resources to do that and we're here to change that," Valdez said.

The festival ended with an awards ceremony. A total of 12 awards were given to the best movies and work done by filmmakers.

To learn more about the festival, future events, the team, official selections, sponsors, and more visit [www.elpasomediafest.com](http://www.elpasomediafest.com).

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### ACCURACY WATCH

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# UTEP Dinner Theatre set to present Disney's 'Newsies!'



MICHELLE REYES OLEA / THE PROSPECTOR

The UTEP Dinner Theatre presents "Disney's Newsies!" Jan. 25 through Feb 10.

BY OSCAR AVILA

The Prospector

The UTEP Dinner Theatre will host Disney's "Newsies!" Friday, Jan. 25 through Sunday, Feb. 10.

Based on the newsboys' strike of 1899, the show is set in New York City and focuses on Jack Kelly (Derrick Cintron), a charming newsboy in charge of the "newsies," a rag-tag team of newsboys.

When Pulitzer (Greg Thompson), a fictional publisher based on the real-life Joseph Pulitzer, raises the distribution prices at the expense of child workers, it calls the attention of Jack, who rallies newsies across the city to go on strike.

The musical features a Tony Award-winning score by Alan Menken and Jack Feldman, and a Tony Award-winning book by Harvey Fierstein.

The production is based on the Disney film of the same name written by Bob Tzudiker and Noni White, a married couple who also worked on other films such as Disney's, "Tarzan," "102 Dalmatians," "The Hunchback of Notre Dame" and "Anastasia." The two approached Michael Finnell, a producer known for his work in horror-comedy films, to turn Disney's "Newsies!" into a nonmusical drama. Next, Disney's studio head, Jeffrey Katzenberg, redirected it into becoming a musical.

Now, under the direction of Jaime Barba, a lecturer of Theatre Arts and Dance, it has come to the UTEP Dinner Theatre to provide an entertaining experience.

Barba has directed many of the performers before, including Cintron.

Cintron told The Prospector he has worked with Barba for 15 years.

"I would not be even half the performer I am today if it wasn't for him; he's actually the reason I was a professional dancer prior to coming back to El Paso," Cintron said.

Moreover, his character has numerous dancing numbers in the production, which is what influenced Cintron to pursue the role.

"Dance is probably my strongest attribute as far as performing, but I felt like I could really bring something to this character if given the opportunity," Cintron said.

He is not the only actor whose role involves some newfound dance routines.

Alyssa Donnelly plays the role of Katherine and also had to dance when auditioning for the role.

"I've been dancing since I was 4 years old, but this past year I started doing shows at the dinner theatre so doing theatre is somewhat new for me," Donnelly said. "When I received the call that I got Katherine, it was a big deal for me, and I was ecstatic because I've never had such a big role."

Donnelly noted that if she had the option to choose her role then she would have been a newsie.

"This show is truly about them — if you can't tell by the title of the show — and they are the backbone of the show," Donnelly said.

Nevertheless, she is grateful for the opportunity to play such a strong female role.

Her character is based on Nellie Bly, a real-life

see NEWSIES on page 12

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NEWSIES from page 11

female journalist who was one of the foremost female journalists in American history.

Although she was never involved in the real-life strike that the musical was based on she did work for Joseph Pulitzer's New York World press, and her name became a synonym for famous female reporters. So her inspiration for the bright, aspiring journalist in Disney's "Newsies!" is not far-fetched.

Overall, Cintron and Donnelly both feel that the process of putting together the musical has been a tough yet worthwhile experience.

"The UTEP Dinner Theatre has a wealth of talent both on and off stage, and it's so amazing to watch each person get to show off their talents whether it is in a performance capacity or technical capacity," Cintron said.

Donnelly said that viewers can expect to see displays of courage and boldness on stage.

"The show highlights what it means to stand up and fight for a cause that you believe in," Donnelly said.

For ticket information, news about future productions and the UTEP Dinner Theatre's upcoming production of Disney's "Newsies!" visit the UTEP Dinner Theatre's website at [utep.edu/liberalarts/udt](http://utep.edu/liberalarts/udt).

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## UTEP grad exhibits at El Paso Museum of Art

BY CATHERINE RAMIREZ

The Prospector

UTEP graduate Anabel Nájera presented her figural installation "De la Vista Gorda" (From a Blind Eye) and held an artist talk on Jan. 17 at the El Paso Museum of Art (EPMA) about the creative process behind her work and her experience working on a yearlong project with the EPMA.

Nájera recently graduated from UTEP with a Bachelor in Fine Arts, double majoring in ceramics and painting and was selected to be apart of the LabEPMA series.

"It is very rare that undergraduates are exhibited in a museum," said Vincent Burke, associate professor, head of ceramics at UTEP and Nájera's mentor.

The LabEPMA series was created by the EPMA and allows emerging artists to work alongside a curator from the museum to propose and create an art piece to exhibit. Every year a spot is reserved for one UTEP undergraduate student.

"It's not really an award it's more of an honor to be selected," Burke said. "It's such an amazing experience for students because this is what an artist aspires to do in the real world."

Nájera is one step closer to becoming an experienced artist as she now worked alongside an EPMA

curator in 2018 and created a 9-foot tall sculpture named "De la Vista Gorda" made of fiberglass, thread and acrylic that Nájera sewed together and painted to resemble a plump naked human body.

“

There is this constant search for beauty — through the process I started thinking how I would make this body type beautiful

”

- ANABEL NÁJERA

Artist and UTEP graduate

"De la vista gorda' is a saying we have that means, to ignore a fact voluntarily and consciously and so in my culture we don't talk about the body. It's a sensitive subject and it just makes us uncomfortable," Nájera said at her artist talk. "I thought it would be interesting to use 'de la vista gorda' for this body type."

The idea of "De la Vista Gorda" came to Nájera when she established the idea to create a piece that explored the issues of unattainable beauty standards, particularly those on the border where she says there is an obesity epidemic, but over time Nájera's thought process changed and she began to see the beauty of a larger body.

"I was studying sculptures more specifically those of Venus, the Goddess of Beauty, and in the first sculptures of her she had big hips and big breasts and it was seen as beautiful and healthy enough to carry a child," Nájera said. "We move to later pieces of Venus and the form changed into a skinner body."

Nájera then began questioning what beauty meant to her and noted how beauty standards are represented in society today.

"Now you have to be skinny, healthy and curvaceous all at the same time and I think it's such an unattainable body goal and it's hard for me to relate," Nájera said. "There is this constant search for beauty — through the process I started thinking how I would make this body type beautiful"

Nájera also showcased two other pieces, "The Rack" and "Broken," both made out of ceramics. All of Nájera's three pieces of art on display at the EPMA correlate with the topic of critiquing cultural standards of beauty and individual identity.

"The rack is a torture device that was used to pull apart the extremities of the body and dislocate the bones. I know it sounds violent, but I think it works as a metaphor by how and what we go through and end up with a fragmented self," Nájera said. "In this case I left the extremities, arms and legs, and it left me with this undefined self and identity."

Nájera now plans to take a small vacation before her travels to Germany where she'll spend a few months as a resident artist to continue to build her skills.

"She has grown so much as an artist, but I think one thing that hasn't changed is that she has remained driven and fierce with her work," Burke said. "You have to have drive and ambition as an artist and she has it."

Catherine Ramirez may be reached at [theprospector1@gmail.com](mailto:theprospector1@gmail.com).



GLENDA AVALOS / THE PROSPECTOR

UTEP graduate Anabel Nájera converses with UTEP Associate Professor Vincent Burke about her exhibition on Jan. 17 at EPMA.

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## Athletes to watch: UTEP track and tennis



GABY VELASQUEZ / THE PROSPECTOR

UTEP will hit the track again on Jan. 25 and Jan. 26 at the New Mexico Collegiate Classic

## BY ISAIAH RAMIREZ

The Prospector

As the spring semester kicks off at UTEP there are certain athletes looking to leave an impact on their respective seasons. Here are some athletes to watch in UTEP Women's Track & Field and UTEP Women's Tennis.

## UTEP Women's Track and Field

## Lilian Koech

Lilian Koech's resume speaks for itself. The red-shirt senior is a 2018 outdoor All Conference-USA first team selection in the 1500-meter race, as well as a second team All Conference-USA selection in 2017 and 2018 in the 800-meter race. Last season, Koech earned an invitation to the NCAA West Preliminaries finishing 14th at the event. In the first indoor meet of the season Jan. 12 at the Texas Tech Corky Classic, Koech recorded a time of 4:59.88 in route to a first-place finish in the mile run. Koech was named the Steve Hoy Athlete of the Week after her performance at the Texas A&M Triangular meet.

## Chantoba Bright

Freshman Chantoba Bright is coming off an impressive outing at the Texas Corky Classic recording a leap of 5.90 meters in the long jump ranking her 24th in the nation and first in Conference-USA. Bright recorded a fifth place finish in the long jump at the Nairobi IAAF World Under 18 Championships. At the South African Under 20 Championship, Bright earned a gold medal in the long jump and a bronze in the triple jump. Bright finished second in the long jump with a leap of 5.63 meters. Bright also posted a personal best time of 2:08.02 in the 800-meter event, which ranks her ninth nationally and second in Conference-USA.

## Madison Gibson

Junior Madison Gibson is coming off a standout 2018 indoor season with two first-place finishes at the Don Kirby Tailwind in the 400-meter and 4x400-meter relay. Gibson's 2018 outdoor performances were just as stellar, earning a silver medal with the

4x400 relay team at the C-USA Championship. Gibson also recorded a time of 11:38.18 in the distance medley race.

## UTEP Women's Tennis

## Erandi Martinez

In her freshman campaign, Martinez was named team MVP and for good reason. Martinez is currently tied for seventh all-time on UTEP's single-win list with 20. Martinez maintained a five-match win streak from February to March in her freshman season. In the 2018 fall single season, Martinez won straight sets at the ITA Mountain Regional Tournament. She earned a consolation championship victory at the SDSU Fall Invite this past fall defeating sophomore Ludovica Infantio from Grand Canyon University.

## Kristen Prelle

Freshman Kirsten Prelle has already begun to show signs of excellence through the 2018 fall season. Prelle won her second collegiate single and double matchups at the ITA Mountain Regional Tournament and reached the round of 32 in the singles bracket. Prelle defeated freshman Wiktorina Nosek from Boise State University in the round of 64 before falling to sophomore Alexandra Pisareva from Utah State. Prelle also had a six-match, single winning streak reaching the championship of the SDSU fall classic before falling in a three-set battle against sophomore Nnena Nadozie of San Diego State University.

## Milena Baigorria

Sophomore Milena Baigorria posted a solid freshman season with a 3-0 record for the Miners. Baigorria earned four doubles wins and had a four-match winning streak from January to March. Baigorria also earned back-to-back doubles victory against Grand Canyon and Angelo State. At the ITA Mountain Regional Tournament, Baigorria earned a win against Weber State freshman Sara Parker in straight sets. Baigorria was also named to the Conference-USA Commissioner's academic honor roll in 2017.

Isaiah Ramirez may be reached at theprospector1@gmail.com.

## Men's Basketball looks to bounce back



GABY VELASQUEZ / THE PROSPECTOR

UTEP men's basketball will be in action Jan. 24 and Jan. 26 at the Don Haskins Center in conference matchups.

## BY DANIEL MENDEZ

The Prospector

The UTEP Miners men's basketball team returns home to the Don Haskins Center for a two-game homestand as they look to bounce back after losing two straight games on the road.

UTEP (6-11, 1-5 C-USA) is dead last in Conference USA division standings. Their lone win in conference play came against the Rice Owls on Jan. 12 that ended in a buzzer beater by freshman guard Jordan Lathon.

Despite being last in standings and four games away from sitting in first place, the Miners defense has been what keeps them in games. UTEP is ranked seventh in C-USA allowing 69 points per game. UTEP has 79 steals on the season averaging 4.6 steals a game and 2.8 blocks a game. The last time the Miners were home they recorded their season high in blocks with eight against North Texas Jan. 5.

On the offensive side of the court, it is still a work in progress as it is not up to par compared to the defense.

UTEP averages nearly 67 points per game, which puts them ahead of Charlotte for last in scoring offense.

Stretches of turnovers are what disrupt the Miners offense. Against Middle Tennessee, they were up by 12 before the half, but four costly turnovers to close out the half allowed the Blue Raiders to cut the lead to two. UTEP would go on to lose by three. They have committed 277 turnovers on the season averaging 16 a game. Opposing teams are averaging 12 points off turnovers.

Despite the issues, the young guns of the men's basketball team have been producing.

During the conference slate, freshman guard Nigel Hawkins leads the Miners in scoring, averaging 16 points per game, while fellow freshman forward Efe Odigie leads C-USA in rebounds av-

eraging almost 10 boards a game. Both freshmen are in the top 25 of scoring leaders in conference. Lathon averages 3.1 assists per game putting him in the top 10 of the conference leaders in assists.

Sophomore guard Evan Gilyard is shooting 40 percent from behind the arc making him the conference leader in 3-point-field goal percentage.

One area of concern is the lone senior Paul Thomas. The senior is averaging seven points a game and grabbing five boards. In comparison to his junior season, Thomas averaged eight points, six rebounds per game. Just recently, against Middle Tennessee Thomas came off the bench for the Miners, making it the first game all season the senior did not start.

First up for the Miners on their two-game homestand will be the Old Dominion Monarchs (14-5, 4-2 C-USA) on Thursday, Jan. 24.

ODU is led by their senior guards, Ahmad Caver and B.J. Stith, both averaging double-digit points. Smith not only scores but attacks the boards. The guard is ranked number five in conference rebounds, averaging eight boards a game.

UTEP completes the homestand on Saturday, Jan. 26, when they face the Charlotte 49ers (5-12, 2-4 C-USA). This will be the third game this week for Charlotte as they face Old Dominion, then go on the road to University Of Texas at San Antonio, followed by UTEP.

The 49ers average nearly 60 points per game, their leading scorer is senior guard Jon Davis, who averages 20 points per game, making him the second leading scorer in C-USA.

UTEP and ODU are scheduled for a 7 p.m. tipoff and the game will be broadcast on ESPN+ on Thursday, Jan. 23, and Jan. 24 against Charlotte is scheduled for 7 p.m.

Students may get their tickets at the UTEP Sports Lottery, available at [utepsportslottery.utep.edu](http://utepsportslottery.utep.edu).

Daniel Mendez may be reached at theprospector1@gmail.com.



# Hockey excels across Sun City: What's next with El Paso Rhinos and UTEP Hockey

BY ISAIAH RAMIREZ

The Prospector

The El Paso Rhinos (24-7) sit in first place in the Junior A midwestern division standing just one game ahead of the Oklahoma City Blazers (23-7). The team has won its last four games, only allowing two goals during their last two matches against the Wichita Thunder.

The 2017 Thorne Cup and midwestern division champions have been in contested battles as of late with division rival Oklahoma City Blazers, splitting the season series 3-3.

One reason the Rhinos sit at top of the decision is due to forward Jonas Burman. Burman is tied for fourth in the midwestern division in total points on the season at 44.

The Swedish sensation has scored a goal in each of the last four games for the Rhinos while having three assists in the same span.

Burman leads the Rhinos in assists with 26 and averages six points per game.

Another reason for the successful scoring for the Rhinos has been the passing of forward Martin Dubsky.

Dubsky is tied for second on the team with 25 assists. In the Rhinos 5-4 win against the

Oklahoma City Blazers on Jan 13. Dubsky had three assists as well as two assists in the next two matchups against the Wichita Thunder.

The Rhinos have also scored 36 total goals during this four game winning streak.

With a home record of (11-1) the Rhinos look to extend not only the winning streak but the home winning streak as well when they take on the Ontario Avalanche at the El Paso Special Event Center for a three game series January 25, 26, and 27.

The first two matchups are set for a 7 p.m. start time, while the final game is set for a 4:30 start time.

Isaiah Ramirez may be reached at theprospector1@gmail.com.



**WHO:** El Paso Rhinos  
**WHAT:** Three game series vs Ontario Avalanche  
**WHEN:** 7 pm Jan 25, Jan 26, Jan 27  
**WHERE:** El Paso Special Events Center

BY ARIADNA GONZALEZ

The Prospector

The UTEP hockey team is currently on a 13-game winning streak and looks to close out the season on the same pace.

The Miners last won the Texas Collegiate Hockey Conference Championship in 2017 and look to do the same this year. The Miners have just two defeats this season (20-2-1). UTEP won their quarterfinal matchup against Texas A&M 5-4 in the TCHC playoffs last season before falling against North Texas 2-1 finishing the season 19-11. The Miners are currently in first place in the TCHCC South Division.

Here are the reasons the Miners have not lost on the ice since November.

## Main Scorers

Sophomore forward Austin Simpson has been a main factor in the Miners success. Simpson leads the team with 109 points and 11 assists. Team chemistry of the Miners is a major element in Simpson's game, according to the UTEP and El Paso Rhinos star.

"It's really easy playing with the people I live with," Simpson said, "It's been an easy transition."

Another scoring threat on this experienced Miners team is sophomore forward Carlo Wittor. Wittor comes in as the team's leading scorer with 35 goals and is second on the team with 33 assists.

"Passing a lot, along with backdoor goals, and shooting a lot, that's how it al-

ways worked and it's going to work in the future too," Wittor said.

## Stifling defense for UTEP

The Miners defense has been on another level with three straight shutouts and allowing only two goals in their last five games. Sophomore goalie John-Luke Prystayko has four shutouts this season and a save percentage of .883.

"Our goalie has been doing a good job blocking a lot of shots and preventing shots around the net," Wittor said.

"Playing good defense and scoring, that's going to be the recipe to win the conference championship," said Wittor.

Team has scored a total of 223 goals and allowed a total of 51 goals.

## Undefeated record at home

UTEP is currently 12-0 at home and has the best home record in the TCHC.

"It's really nice to have a big support group and it is really nice to see the large amount of support out here," Simpson said.

The Miners will be in action against the Texas State Bobcats at 11 am Feb. 1 and 3:30 p.m. Feb. 2 at the El Paso County Events Center.

Adriana Gonzalez may be reached at theprospector1@gmail.com.

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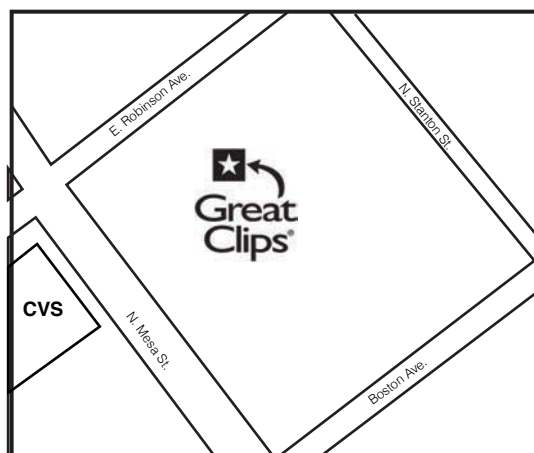
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