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Arts & Entertainment Issue



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Gracias, Yalitza, demostraste que México es un país racista



BY CLAUDIA FLORES

The Prospector

El domingo 24 de febrero se llevó a cabo la entrega 91 de los premios Oscars a la Academia y cabe destacar que "Roma" se llevó tres de las diez nominaciones que obtuvo este año—mejor cinematografía, mejor película extranjera y mejor director.

Sin embargo, para muchos televidentes en casa la atención estuvo puesta sobre Yalitza Aparicio quien con su participación en "Roma" recibió una nominación a mejor actriz.

Y mientras daban comienzo a la ceremonia, no pude evitar entrar a las redes sociales para ver lo que la gente opinaba acerca de la aparición del elenco de la película mexicana en la alfombra roja.

Por supuesto todo el mundo aplaudía a Cuarón y a Marina de Tavira, pero cuando se trataba de Aparicio todo se veía muy dividido.

Por un lado, muchos apoyaban a Aparicio por su nominación y su desfile por la alfombra roja. Por otro lado, cientos de comentarios negativos y derogatorios hacia la actriz inundaron las redes sociales.

Lamentablemente para México, ni Tavira, ni Aparicio se llevaron el premio en su categoría, pero "Roma" nos dio la oportunidad de ver una cara de México que con la nominación de Aparicio salió a la luz.

Parece ser que como mexicanos nos sentimos indignados de que una mujer indígena nos haya representado en la entrega de los premios a la Academia, cuando Aparicio representa las raíces de toda una nación.

Nos quejamos tanto del racismo que sufrimos en otros países, de como la gente nos denigra por el simple hecho de ser mexicanos, pero qué podemos esperar a cambio si somos racistas con nuestra propia gente.

Se que estoy generalizando y que a muchos nos dio gusto ver cómo Aparicio triunfó con éxito, pero nunca esta de mas hacer conciencia de lo se vive en nuestro país.

Es una pena ver que dentro de la misma escena artística en México, comentaristas como Elsa

Burgos y actores de telenovelas como Sergio Goiry y Laura Zapata hayan tenido el valor de ofenderla por su origen.

Prevía a la entrega de los Oscars, todos los días era de escuchar en la televisión o ver en las redes sociales lo "fea" y "poco talentosa" que esta mujer es.

Me da tanta tristeza ver que, en vez de apoyar el talento mexicano, como siempre tratamos de pisotear a aquel que logra salir adelante. Porque muchos se quejaban de cómo una mujer de origen indígena proveniente de Oaxaca pudiera vestirse con prendas Christian Dior y usar zapatos Jimmy Choo, cuando para la opinión de muchos por algo existen las clases sociales.

Es una decepción ver como nosotros mismos nos ponemos piedras en el camino, porque para muchos la participación de Aparicio fue un simple golpe de suerte, pero, aun así, fue un golpe de suerte a beneficio de Aparicio.

Y a pesar de los comentarios denigrantes hacia su persona, Aparicio ha demostrado ser una mujer brillante y talentosa al saber manejar la situación.

Sí, este es su primer papel como actriz, pero Aparicio ha logrado cautivar la atención del mundo con su actuación como Cleo.

Con "Roma," Cuarón realmente logra destacar la rutina de muchas familias mexicanas, así como el amor incondicional y la relación que se desarrolla dentro de los hogares con las empleadas domésticas.

Y de igual manera Aparicio nos demostró lo mucho que nos falta como mexicanos para poder aceptarnos los unos a los otros. Como mexicanos tenemos un largo camino que recorrer cuando se trata de aceptar nuestras raíces y la belleza que estas representan en cada uno de nosotros.

Así que gracias Cuarón por ser un genio del cine mexicano y a Aparicio por demostrarnos que, aunque no nos guste reconocerlo somos una nación racista.

Claudia Flores may be reached at theprospectordaily1@gmail.com



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THE PROSPECTOR

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Christin Apodaca: an Artist makes a name for herself in the borderland

BY DANIEL MENDEZ

The Prospector

In a world dominated by males, one female artist is creating waves of change in black and white throughout the Sun City.

Christin Apodaca, 29, born and raised in El Paso, attended Burges High School before starting her degree at UTEP. She would go on to graduate from the University of New Mexico in studio art with a concentration in oil painting.

During the last four years, Apodaca has taken her art more seriously. Challenging herself to create and draw an art piece every day, she said some get completed and some don't, but the consistency of her work has paid off.

In 2018, she was one among the various painters for El Paso's Neon Desert Music Festival. She was the first place winner in the 2017 Chalk The Block contest, where contestants had to live paint a car. Apodaca went home with a cash prize of \$2,000. She has been commissioned to paint murals across the Borderland, from local bars such as DeadBeach, Neon Rose and Benny Franks to department stores like West Elm, from downtown El Paso to Segundo Barrio.

She credits her success to hard work and years of dedication to her craft.

"I feel like if you work hard enough, good things will happen," Apodaca said. "But you have to be consistent about it. It just means I'm doing something right. Even something small."

Apodaca's artwork has a central theme.

The majority of her art pieces highlight a female. She challenges the stereotype of machismo she has experienced in the local art scene.

"I feel I've dealt with too much of it at home. Machismo-like attitude to where art is still such a male-driven thing that I only want to include females in my artwork just because of that," Apodaca said.

One of her more well-known murals is a female in front of cactus on the corner of El Paso Street and Father Rahm in the Segundo Barrio. Apodaca relays the message of the importance of representation in a multicultural city.

"(That is) always going to be a theme. The bigger the girl, the better," Apodaca said.

Apodaca's technique is usually a marker and paper aesthetic. She had to get comfortable using these types of materials at her disposable due to a lack of studio space. Now she prefers the use of markers because of speed at which she can complete a piece.

"I feel it's the instant gratification of finishing a piece," Apodaca said, "With an oil painting, you take weeks to finish it. But with the drawing, I could finish in a couple hours. So, I think just the accessibility and the ease of tools is what made me stick to it the most."

From an audience's point of view, her artwork is seen in black and white. To her, all art pieces have color because she has to envision them before they make it to the drawing board.

"I always tell people I live in color. I'm looking at everything in color," Apodaca said.

"So, to understand my drawings, the finished product, it's because I had to see it in color first. To me, they're all in color."

"Drawing for five hours a day you don't really have a lot of time to talk to people," Apodaca said.

Apodaca decided to pursue a career as an artist because her artwork was the only thing she felt was her strongest aptitude. The response she was receiving even in the early stages of her career was positive. Now, as she reflects back on what inspires her and as she continues to distribute her artwork throughout the city what excites her is the recognition.

"I meet so many people who I have no idea who they are, but they know who I am,"

Apodaca said. "And I think that's so scary and so exciting at the same time. People I actually don't know care and I think that's really cool. I think that's what all of it is about. That recognition, being able to share things with other people that other people just respond so positively about. I think that's exciting."

Currently, Apodaca will begin to work on some commissioned pieces. She will be featured on the upcoming La Prada posters and will be doing a game poster for one of the El Paso Locomotive home games.

To know more about Apodaca's work visit her Instagram @christin.m.a

Daniel Mendez may be reached at theprospectoraily1@gmail.com

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The Interdisciplinary Research Building's construction continues unhindered

BY VALERIA OLIVARES

The Prospector

The Interdisciplinary Research Building (IDRB), located behind the Undergraduate Learning Center (UGLC) and bumping against Sun Bowl Drive, is currently on schedule due to a lack of setbacks, according to UTEP officials.

"I know that other buildings within the city of El Paso had some issues; we've had none," said Greg McNicol, associate vice president for facility management.

There have been no surprises during the construction of the IDRB, McNicol said. This has allowed for contingency funds, which tend to be saved for unforeseen issues, to be allocated towards the construction of additional spaces.

Three sources provide the \$85 million in funding that the Texas Legislature authorized for the construction of the IDRB. Tuition revenue bonds contributed \$70 million, UTEP pitched in \$5 million and the Permanent University Fund (PUF), which supports The University of Texas and Texas A&M systems of higher education, provided



SERGIO MUÑOZ / THE PROSPECTOR

The Interdisciplinary Research Building is scheduled to be ready by early 2020.

ed \$10 million, McNicol said.

UTEP's IDRB planning committee, which was appointed by UTEP President Diana Natalicio in 2015, took flexibility

into consideration during the planning portion of the building.

Instead of serving a single college, the IDRB will house students conducting re-

search from across the nine colleges and schools at UTEP. Students will be encouraged to potentially collaborate with students from different colleges to strengthen their research.

The committee made sure that the design of the building would be able to adapt to the different types of research projects.

McNicol compares the IDRB to the UGLC because they both provide for the needs of students from every college.

"Different colleges use the (UGLC) building because that building has a unique set of classroom space that kind of takes care of everybody. This research building is going to do the same thing," McNicol said.

In order to move research projects into the IDRB, students must present a case that explains their reasons and why it would be beneficial to move from their current college.

Construction of the IDRB is expected to be done by the end of 2019, McNicol said. Afterward, the building will be furnished in early 2020 to be ready to house its first tenants.

Valeria Olivares may be reached at theprospectoraily1@gmail.com

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Beto O'Rourke, Ruben Garcia honored in annual El Pasoan of the Year ceremony



NOAH SARABIA / THE PROSPECTOR

Beto O'Rourke at the El Paso Inc. luncheon where he received the 'El Pasoan of the Year' award.

BY NOAH SARABIA

The Prospector

El Paso Inc. awarded Director of the Annunciation House Ruben Garcia the Community Spirit award, and former congressman Beto O'Rourke the El Pasoan of the Year award Tuesday, Feb. 19, at its annual El Pasoan of the Year luncheon at the Centennial Club on Fort Bliss.

For the past 10 years, El Paso Inc. has annually recognized an individual or organization of importance in El Paso that has helped shape the community. This year's nominees included Ahsan Choudhuri, Leo

Duran, Veronica Escobar, Ruben Garcia, Aaron Jones, Fred Loya Sr., Beto O'Rourke and Khalid Robinson.

The Community Spirit Award represents an individual or an organization in the community who not only exemplifies the spirit of El Paso in their work, but also in the extra work they contribute to different organizations and causes. El Pasoan of the Year recognizes an individual who goes above and beyond in the elevation of the community in a positive way.

Community Spirit Award

This year, Garcia was recognized with

the Community Spirit Award for his active work in the Annunciation House. The Annunciation House is dedicated to helping those in need, including but not limited to the poor and the undocumented. Garcia said his organization sees close to 3,000 refugees per week.

Garcia has worked at the Annunciation House for 41 years, a lifelong journey for him, and he doesn't see an end in sight. When asked if he would continue working he stated, "I will continue with it as long as the good Lord allows me to do it," Garcia said.

El Pasoan of the Year

The El Pasoan of the Year award was given to former congressman Beto O'Rourke. He was awarded not only for his actions in politics, but everything he has done to shine a positive light on the "City of El Paso."

His wife, Amy O'Rourke, expressed her gratitude by stating that it is not only a recognition of her husband but also a recognition of the people that have helped them in their journey.

"They're totally stepping up to take charge

and make sure the people they elect in office see through to the things that they find important," she said.

To O'Rourke, the award represents a pinnacle. He said that everything he has done professionally has been inspired by El Paso.

"El Paso has done heroic work in order to make this a better country," O'Rourke said.

He explained that the award also recognizes the people behind him who have made him a better person along the way. He stated that he does not do anything for the recognition rather he aims to do a great job for El Paso. He stated that the city has inspired him.

Noah Sarabia may be reached at theprospectordaily1@gmail.com

ACCURACY WATCH

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'A Piece of Our Mind' highlights social issues

BY ALEXIA X. NAVA CARMONA

The Prospector

The Rubin Center for the Visual Arts is hosting "A Piece of Our Mind," an exhibit that showcases the poster works of graphic artists Joe Scorsone and Alice Drueding.

"Most of our work focuses on sociopolitical and environmental topics.

"Sometimes we aim to raise awareness of an issue, other times we want to generate new interest in a familiar subject," Scorsone and Drueding said in an email interview.

The 47 posters in the exhibition speak about hunger, the environment, immigration and human rights using humor, irony and the power of visual literacy, according to the Rubin Center website.

"Scorsone and Drueding utilize the accessibility of the poster and the power of visual literacy, irony and humor as a vehicle to contribute to a critical discourse in a deeply divided time, both socially and politically," the exhibit description on the website states. "The widespread impact of the wit and profundity of these works on the viewers lingers long after they are experienced, and it also teaches us about the enduring influence of visual culture throughout changing times."

In one of their pieces, a fish – half flesh and half skeleton with the word "CO2" on it – portrays

how carbon dioxide kills life on Earth. Another piece shows a bird with the point of a pen instead of its usual head, making a point about freedom of speech.

Scorsone and Drueding have been designing posters together since 1986, according to the Rubin Center website.

"At the suggestion of Professor Anne Giangulio, a former student of ours who is familiar with our work, we were asked by UTEP if we would be interested in exhibiting our work there," the artists said. "As former teachers, we like the idea of exhibiting in university museums and galleries where the work will be seen by people of different ages and areas of expertise and interest."

Scorsone and Drueding's award-winning work has been shown in multiple exhibitions and publications around the world, as well as some permanent collections.

The exhibit opened Jan. 24 and runs through April 12.

The artists will be at UTEP the second week of April to judge graphic design categories for the 2019 Annual Juried UTEP Student Art Exhibition, according to Rubin Center Director Kerry Doyle.

For information on the artists, visit www.sd-posters.com. For information on the Rubin Center and its exhibitions, visit www.utep.edu/rubin.

Alexia X. Nava Carmona may be reached at theprospectordaily1@gmail.com

Local Artist draws the border life in El Paso

BY MARIA RAMOS PACHECO

The Prospector

Patrick Gabaldon is an attorney and a local artist in El Paso, better known for his colorful paintings about El Paso desert areas and the cartoon drawings of former congressman Beto O'Rourke and U.S. Rep. Veronica Escobar.

In 2016, Gabaldon started to create more work related to politics, when El Pasoan and Democrat Beto O'Rourke was in the race for Senate against Republican Ted Cruz. Gabaldon wanted to show his support to O'Rourke, so he decided to do it in a way he loved the most, doodling.

Gabaldon sketched out a cartoon of O'Rourke. People liked it so much that he started to produce a number of T-shirts the cartoon and also created posters for O'Rourke's campaign.

"I became frustrated with others trying to tell the world what the border is – what our community is. I wanted to create work that represents the beauty and unique spirit found here in the El Paso community," Gabaldon said.

Gabaldon wants to show the world the reality about El Paso and the people in the community with his art and he strongly disagrees with the national emergency President Trump declared.

"Trump's position of wanting to build the wall here in El Paso is ridiculous," Gabaldon said. "There is already fencing. There are already massive amounts of CBP and tech along our border, specifically here in El Paso. I don't acknowledge the premise set by the president and his supporters because true progress and real security at the border exist beyond moronic catchphrases. What we need is more

compassion, more aid to those countries the migrants are fleeing and more intelligence from our elected officials."

Gabaldon strongly believes that art is a great way to express the beauty of El Paso and that with his work and other local artists' people can have a better understanding of what the border is like.

"El Paso is not a response to Trump, but a reflection of love for our culture and region," Gabaldon said. "Whether it is my colorful cacti or the black and white faces created by Christin Apodaca, the art on the border persists in protest precisely because it is proud of El Paso."

Gabaldon will continue to create new artwork for the 2020 election and he will support any candidate whether they are Republican or Democrat. Gabaldon said he wants to doodle a candidate that is thoughtful and stands for what he believes is right and equal for everybody.

His work has been exhibited in restaurants, art galleries, the El Paso International Airport, Southwest University Ballpark and the University of Texas at El Paso.

Gabaldon sends a message to all UTEP students who can vote and make a difference for El Paso and the country.

"Decisions made at the local and national level affect you whether you like it or not. It is up to us to take ownership of our futures," Gabaldon said.

You can find his work on his Instagram @gabaldonart and his web page at www.gabaldonart.com.

Maria Ramos Pacheco may be reached at theprospectordaily1@gmail.com

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El Paso's Finest offers a space for art in Downtown El Paso



CLAUDIA FLORES / THE PROSPECTOR

El Paso's Finest held a reception that featured work from local artists inspired by the Mexican painter Frida Kahlo on Friday, Feb. 22, at 314 Mesa St.

BY CLAUDIA FLORES

The Prospector

El Paso's Finest held a reception for its monthly art show Friday, Feb. 22, which featured the work of local artists inspired by the Mexican painter Frida Kahlo.

Located on 314 Mesa St., El Paso's Finest is a small art store that not only serves as a gallery, but offers weekly painting classes and monthly events for the community.

"I always wanted a store where I could showcase my work, but at the same time when I got the store, I felt we could fill it up with everyone else (work) not just myself," said owner Ruben Gomez.

As part of its monthly shows, members of the community are encouraged to exhibit their artwork, whether they are amateurs or professionals.

El Paso's Finest opens its doors to any artist who wishes to sell their work.

The Frida Kahlo theme filled El Paso's Finest's gallery for "Viva La Frida" night and included paintings using different techniques, cookies, stickers, keychains and other items made by locals.

"We are in this whole movement of women's empowerment, and Frida Kahlo was big on women and having the power and doing things on her own, so we went ahead and did an event on her," Gomez said.

Submissions work on a first-come, first-serve for the artists, Gomez said.

"It's just an open call to artists. I don't judge their work, because who am I to judge someone's art? So if the spot is open, it's theirs," Gomez said.

Illustrator and fine artist Moises Garcia was one of many artists to submit his work. He entered

two paintings, one of them representing Frida and her ghosts, he said.

Garcia said these gatherings are important not only for incoming artists to exhibit their work, but to bring the El Paso community together. Garcia is a painting instructor at El Paso's Finest and said art is not only something beautiful for people to see and appreciate, but a way of communication.

"Art is just as important as the news and the radio," Garcia said. "Back in the day it was all art that communicated to people, and it's still a way of communication that hasn't been lost. It's super important to have art especially in the community."

Business owner and stay-at-home mom Rebecca Martinez submitted a painting of Frida for the show. She said being part of the art scene opened doors to not only know more about art, but to get to know more about the art scene in El Paso.

"I know there's a lot of talent here in El Paso and there were a lot of artists I wasn't aware of before, until I started painting myself and selling my art at the markets, because that's when you really get to meet people from the community," Martinez said.

Even though Martinez is an amateur painter, she said she is excited to be part of the art community and encourages other artists to come forward to showcase their work.

"Don't be afraid. You can see your mistakes, but everyone else sees the beauty in your work and that's what matters in the end," Martinez said.

For information on El Paso's Finest and its monthly art shows, visit [Facebook.com/shopepfinest](https://www.facebook.com/shopepfinest).

Claudia Flores may be reached at theprospector1@gmail.com.





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COURTESY OF THE CENTENNIAL MUSEUM AND CHIHUAHUA DESERT GARDENS

The Lhakhang Cultural Exhibit is located near Centennial Plaza.

BY CATHERINE RAMIREZ

The Prospector

Along the U.S.-Mexico border, at the heart of UTEP's campus in Centennial Plaza, sits the Lhakhang Cultural Exhibit, a gift from Bhutan and the only structure of its kind found outside of small Himalayan countries.

A lhakhang is a religious structure, or temple, where religious activities take place and house sacred objects. The translation of "lhakhang" means "the house of gods" for enlightened beings such as the Buddha, his followers and other deities.

The story of UTEP's lhakhang began in the summer of 2008 when the Smithsonian Folklife Festival in Washington, D.C., showcased the Kingdom of Bhutan. Bhutanese craftsmen, painters and other artisans constructed a true lhakhang on the National Mall. During the opening ceremonies of the Folklife Festival, His Royal Highness Jigyel Ugyen Wangchuck, Bhutanese prince, presented the lhakhang as a gift to the U.S. and to UTEP.

"We offer it as a symbol of our hopes for a future relationship, as stable, as durable and as sweet as the Himalayan pine that it is made of," Wangchuck said at the ceremony in 2008. "We are very happy that this (lhakhang) will have a home in the beautiful and, I dare say, Bhutanese campus of The University of Texas at El Paso."

The lhakhang was reassembled in 2015 as

part of the university's campus transformation project in conjunction with its Centennial Celebration.

"Bhutan sent about 10 artisans (to El Paso) to help reassemble the lhakhang," said Kaye Mullins, education curator for the Centennial Museum & Chihuahuan Desert Gardens. "The Bhutanese did the artwork on the walls. They did the columns in the middle, they did the statues, the altarpieces and the furniture."

The artwork now displayed in the Lhakhang Cultural Exhibit ranges from paintings, columns, sculptures, furniture and clothing. It represents Buddhist artists from all over Bhutan who have created works to represent the country's culture and heritage.

"They were all handcrafted by the Bhutanese. We want people to know the artwork," Mullins said. "Not necessarily to go in to study Buddhism, that's not the idea of it. The artwork in there is exquisite. They have covered every single thread of that canvas. Everything in there has a story, if not 17 stories."

The Lhakhang Cultural Exhibit at The University of Texas at El Paso is open to the public from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. every Wednesday and 1-3 p.m. the first Sunday of each month, except holidays. Mullins serves as a tour guide during these times.

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

El Pasoans gather for Black History Month



► 1



► 2



► 3

VALERIA OLIVARES / THE PROSPECTOR

People from El Paso came together to celebrate Black History Month at a parade that started on the corner of Montana Street and Pershing Street on Saturday, Feb. 23. People followed the parade as it made its way to Mary Webb Park in order to start the celebrations with food and music. The event was organized by Kappa Epsilon Psi Military Sorority. 1. Women ride in a cart at the Black History Parade in El Paso, Texas on Saturday, Feb. 23. 2. People riding a float that reads "Madam C. J. Walker Company" and "George Washington Carver" wave during the Black History Parade in El Paso, Texas on Saturday, Feb. 23. 3. Children attending the celebrations after the Black History Parade hold a sign at Mary Webb Park on Saturday, Feb. 23.

Jason Craig: The man behind the DJ booth at the Don Haskins Center



PRISCILLA GOMEZ / THE PROSPECTOR

DJ Jason Craig provides a great atmosphere at the UTEP men's basketball home games and brings an exceptional amount of energy to the Don Haskins Center

BY DANIEL MENDEZ

The Prospector

For every UTEP men's basketball game at home there is a guy behind a deejay booth playing music from all genres and generations, located right in the middle of the student section next to the band.

DJ Jason Craig, 34 an army veteran, is the man behind the sounds of the Don Haskins Center.

Craig, originally from Orange County, California, has been deejaying for 10 years. Craig started his music career in upstate New York, eventually getting his big break in Baltimore, Maryland. Originally what got people's attention was the fact that he played West Coast hip-hop music.

"I was bringing something so new to the table because the East Coast, they don't get no West Coast music," Craig said. "You got to know your stuff to be able to play it."

In his first two years, Craig went out and made a name for himself. Craig became hip-hop star Big Sean's DJ for a tour, he deejayed

Chelsea Handler's after-hours party, and he even opened up for hip-hop's Wale. Craig went out and made a name for himself in his first two years.

The father of one then got a military transfer out to the Sun City. He's been deejaying all across El Paso since then.

"They brought me here to Fort Bliss and I decided to stick around. You know, the vibe's dope here," Craig said.

Craig has been at the forefront of self-marketing, going live on different social media platforms to get his name across, creating content and engaging fans. Craig has always been social media savvy, but admits it was a constant hustle to get to where he is at now.

"Eventually all the hard work and just staying consistent got me here at UTEP," Craig said.

One night last year at a local bar on Cincinnati Street, Craig was approached by UTEP's marketing team with a plan to create a home-crowd advantage for men's basketball midway through the 2017-18 campaign. One

bar discussion led to a meeting and within a couple days he was hired to DJ the upcoming home games.

"I gave her my card and I didn't think anything of it," Craig said. "I'm not gonna get a call. I give out my card all the time and don't get a call. So, then I got a call and they're like come in for a meeting and let me tell you my ideas. So, I come in and was given the whole spill of what she wanted to do. And I was like, yes let's try it out, then that was it."

Craig began spinning at the start of conference play last season and has been a constant crowd energizer this season as the Miners have an 8-18 record overall and an 8-7 home record. To Craig, he feeds off the energy from the crowd of the Don Haskins Center and the players.

"We really want more of the students to embrace what you have, show some school spirit," Craig said. "You don't understand how energy given back and forth makes things change. With deejaying, if you're giving me energy, I'm giving you the same amount of energy back and we're

going to have a great time."

Craig told the Prospector he understands fans typically tend to show up to the games only when the Miners are winning, but he believes the Miners need the energy at the Don Haskins to win.

"You give them enough energy, they're going to play harder because their adrenaline goes up. It's all about the energy," Craig said. "We're just trying to get more people to come out and have a good time."

With the basketball season drawing to a close, you can find Craig spinning at local bars around the Sun City. Craig will DJ once again next season when the basketball season tips off again, but until then you can see him at the Miners home season finale as part of "Senior Night" Wednesday, March 6 when UTEP faces Middle Tennessee at the Don Haskins Center. Tipoff is scheduled for 7 p.m.

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UTEP women's basketball looks for major upset vs. second place UAB

BY MICHAEL CUVIELLO

The Prospector

UTEP (7-20, 4-10) will hit the road versus the University Of Alabama at Birmingham (22-5,10-4) in a matchup of upper- and lower-tier teams of the conference March 2.

The Miners have a four-game losing streak versus the Blazers and recently suffered a devastating 26-point home loss earlier in the season to them. A road win would be a tall order but a good momentum gainer as they prepare for the conference tournament.

On a positive note, the Lady Miners have locked a spot in the Conference-USA tournament after beating UTSA last week, 77-73.

UAB currently sits in second place in conference play and leads the conference in scoring margin, by averaging 15 more points a game than their opponent. The Blazers have a balanced scoring team that features four players averaging more than 10 points a game – led by junior forward Racheal Childress at 14 points a game.

Childress, who was the first team all-conference selection last season has been a constant thorn in the side for UTEP as she has averaged 22 points per game against the Miners in her career. In this season's previous matchup, she scored 18 points on six

3-pointers and is second in conference in 3-point percentages at .414.

Another Blazer to watch is junior forward Kaitlyn Thomas who scored 16 points in the previous meeting. She is second in conference in field goal percentage at .596.

The Miners will once again be led by junior forward Zuzanna Puc, who is the only Miner scoring in double-digits, and senior forward Jordan Alexander who has three straight games of more than 13 points.

Puc averages nearly 13 points per game along with seven rebounds per game. Having Puc under the boards should give the Miners a slight advantage in the rebounding department – although as a team, the Blazers have been slightly better in that department. The key for the Lady Miners will be keeping Puc out of foul trouble. Over the past six games, Puc has fouled out twice and been in foul trouble four times.

Alexander is coming off tying a season-high 18 points outing versus University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA), and will be looking to continue her double-digit scoring streak from the past three games.

Junior forward Katarina Zec, who is second on the team, in scoring at 9.4 points per game will also be looking to extend her double-digit scoring streak



FILE PHOTO / THE PROSPECTOR

UTEP women's basketball head coach Kevin Baker calls out a play at the Lady Miners recent home game to nine games.

Zec will look to bounce back from her dreadful shooting performance in the previous matchup versus the Blazers where she was 2 of 11 from the field for four points.

Over the past eight games, she has shot 49.4 percent from the field which is seven points higher than her season average.

The Miners seem to be a different team than

the Blazers faced earlier in a season which had a six-game stretch where they lost by 19 points or more.

"We're a hot team right now. I don't know if anybody wants to play us, we're playing really good basketball right now," said UTEP Head Coach Kevin Baker. UTEP will take on UAB at 1 p.m. March 2 in Birmingham, Alabama.

Michael Cuvillo may be reached at theprospector1@gmail.com.

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UTEP hockey looks to win in first round of ACHA regional tournament

BY ISAIAH RAMIREZ

The Prospector

The UTEP Hockey Club (25-1-1-1) begins its journey to capture the American Collegiate Hockey Conference Championship (ACHA) title this week as they take on Utah State.

The Miners are the no. 12 seed after winning the Texas Collegiate Hockey Conference Championship, while Utah State drew the number nine seed.

The Miners first appearance in the ACHA did not end well as the Miners fell in the first round against the University of Denver.

With the two top scorers in the conference in freshmen Carlos Wittor and Austin Simpson, UTEP looks primed to redeem that loss two seasons ago, and capitalize on what has been a remarkable season.

"We've talked since day one about getting back to where we were two years ago and since day one of practice, there's been a lot of hard work and everyone has bought into the system," said Head coach Tom Herman.

Scoring is without a doubt one of the main strengths for this Miner team. UTEP finished the regular season with five of the top ten scorers in the

TCHC in Wittor, Simpson, and freshmen Jayden Ritchie, Matthew Sanca and Dominik Teras.

Preventing other teams from getting shots in the net was a strength for UTEP as well, with two of top goalies in the conference in freshmen John-Luke Prystayko and Angus Campbell.

Both goalies finished with stifling save percentages, Campbell with .936 and Prystayko with .912.

Utah State does have talent on their side with forward Josh Kerkvilet. Kerkvilet has 21 goals and 14 assists on the season for the Aggies. Kerkvilet's 35 points on the season placed him in second in the Mountain West Conference. The standout forward scored a goal in 11 straight games for Utah State. Kerkvilet had a solid performance against Grand Canyon University in a 5-4 overtime win earlier this year where he scored three goals.

Another player to watch for the Aggies is defenseman Brett Fernandez. Fernandez finished conference play with 13 goals and eight assists. Fernandez's 21 points placed him 10th in the Mountain West Conference.

The Miners West Regional ACHA matchup against Utah State tips off at 4 p.m. Feb. 28 in Tempe, Arizona.

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FILE PHOTO / THE PROSPECTOR

UTEP hockey club will face the Utah State Aggies in the first round of the ACHA tournament Feb. 28

2019

SPRING ELECTIONS THE STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

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UTEP women's basketball clinches spot in conference tournament



FILE PHOTO/ THE PROSPECTOR

Senior forward **Jordan Alexander** scored 18 points in the Lady Miners 77-73 win over UTSA



FILE PHOTO/ THE PROSPECTOR

Junior forward **Ariona Gill** is averaging 12 points in her first season with UTEP



FILE PHOTO/ THE PROSPECTOR

Junior foward **Zuzanna Puc** is leading the Lady Miners with 13 points and seven rebounds a game.



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