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WOMEN'S ISSUE

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THE PROSPECTOR

Assayer of Student Opinion

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Neema Soratgar is a visiting Afghan research scholar housed in the Women's and Gender Studies Department. Photo by Carolina Uribarri/The Prospector

From Kabul to El Paso: The story of Neema Soratgar

BY MARIA L. GUERRERO DURAN The Prospector

Neema Soratgar is an Afghan refugee who has been hired by UTEP as a visiting global scholar, housed in the Women's and Gender Studies Department as a research assistant to Director Gina Nuñez-Mchiri, Ph.D. In 1996, the capital of Afghanistan, Kabul underwent a radical change that has affected the lives of its citizens to an extreme degree. The Taliban regime took over, and the country's people – especially women – encountered days of horror. From 1996 to 2001, the Taliban ideology of the extremist Sharia Law was imposed in what is today known as a war-torn country. This extremist view restricted women from education and work and confined them under the shadow of a man, a burqa, and their homes.

For Soratgar, this invasion meant rebellion. She dedicated years of her life to secretly in-

see **SORATGAR** on page 4

Women in Journalism



From left to right, Rachel Phillips, reporter and anchor for KVIA Channel-7; Martha Pskowski, environmental reporter at the El Paso Times; Gabriela Velasquez, photojournalist at the El Paso Times; Brianna Chavez, reporter, anchor, and producer at KVIA-TV; and Vania Castillo, CBS and KFOX reporter and weather forecaster speaks on the challenges in the industry. Courtesy of Phillips, Pskowski, Velasquez, Chavez, and Castillo.

Local female journalists talk challenges in news industry

BY ITZEL GIRON The Prospector

Women have graced the world of journalism with intellectually written news pieces, beautiful photography, and stunning production in broadcast, though one might not think about the amazing journalists here in the borderland.

Rachel Phillips, Brianna Chavez, Vania Castillo, Gabriela Velasquez, and Martha Pskowski are a few women journalists who cover the city of El Paso through multiple media.

However, the journey to get to where they stand now was not a simple task.

Becoming a journalist in any medium is difficult, but as women, problems tend to begin with self-confidence and mental blocks.

For KVIA Channel 7 reporter and anchor Brianna Chavez, it is a problem she has faced then and even now.

"I could have been a little more confident and I could have been bit kinder to myself because that goes a long way," Chavez said regarding her younger self. "I'm a little more self-aware now and so I wish that was a trait I could've built up on more in college and even in high

school."

Chavez, who at times can be reporting in front of thousands on live television, has dealt with the high pressures of tight deadlines and competitiveness in the newsroom, which at times can create the uncertainty in herself.

"It's just a matter of believing in your abilities and just being a little kinder. If you mess up it's okay," Chavez said. "It's finding little ways to learn from your 'mistakes' or learn from the things you've done and taking that and giving yourself a little more compassion and moving on."

Along with Brianna, CBS and KFOX reporter and weather forecaster Vania Castillo says she can sometimes find herself in the same predicament.

"Go for what you want. I think a lot of the times, especially as Hispanics, we tend to play down our achievements," Castillo said. "I think it's important to acknowledge where you're at and how far you've come and all the work that has gone into that."

Aside from the mental blocks someone might face, it can be a challenge when wanting to prove yourself as a woman to others, not

only in the newsroom but in public.

For Vania, it can sometimes be a dangerous situation. Harassments, assaults and bullying towards women journalists both online and in-person are on the rise, according to a report done by the International Women's Media Foundation. It is something that happens often in this field of work and something Vania has dealt with first-hand.

"I think there's always challenges when working in journalism especially (as a woman journalist), there's like extra precautions you have to take when you're out on the field," Castillo said. "I've been grabbed. I've been harassed and stuff like that."

Even with harassment being yet another problem women face in this field of work; at times, the biggest problem can be others not believing and supporting you and your journey.

For reporter and anchor for KVIA Channel-7 Rachel Phillips, being second guessed by others in newsrooms is something women constantly face. Phillips, who wants to join the sports journalism world has seen and heard the sexist comments made towards women reporting on sports.

Phillips said there is a lot of adversity for female journalists, and she works to educate men that women can report on sports and other topics just as well as men.

"I mean really there should be no competition between the genders, just be like 'yeah, a woman is doing it, cool, oh a man is doing it, cool,'" she said.

As negativity can surround newsrooms and areas of work, it's important to have other women support you especially when faced with hardships. For Phillips, her former co-worker and founder of "Mija, Yes You Can," Iris Lopez, has been a great support system since day one.

"I think we're lucky at Channel 7 with someone like Iris Lopez," Phillips said. "She started (supporting women) because she didn't have that when she started, and she wanted to make sure that other women had that."

Though support from fellow women in the same field is key to a better environment, and the support from men who dominate those areas of work can be critical to having a healthier workplace.

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Opinion

Alberto Silva Fernandez, editor-in-chief

The effects of overturning Roe V. Wade

BY KRISTEN SCHEAFFER
The Prospector

It has been six months since S.B. 8 went into effect in Texas. It has been about three months since the U.S. Supreme Court allowed it to stay in effect for the time being. The month of March is supposed to celebrate women and the strides we have made, yet here we are watching time reverse itself.

It was in 1973 that a Texas statute on what constitutes the right to abortion was deemed unconstitutional. Norma McCorvey, “Jane Roe,” went to the courts in 1970 after asserting her right to terminate a pregnancy and a woman’s right to her privacy over her body, according to Britannica.

Although abortion is an issue



Kristen Scheaffer

protected by Roe v. Wade, it is still a state issue that varies. States like Mississippi and Texas have made headlines based on their recent restrictive laws that have been

signed into law. These states argue they are pro-life, however, there has not been any compromise for the women impacted by these new abortion laws.

Gov. Greg Abbott of Texas signed into law a bill that prohibits abortions beyond six weeks of pregnancy. The reason this is problematic is because most women do not realize they are pregnant before six weeks. Not only this, but there also are not any stipulations to protect the women carrying to term the product of rape or incest.

Some will argue these women can put their children up for adoption. First, not all children are adopted and can end up in the foster system. Second, this does not prevent hospital bills piling up on women

of lower income, especially during a time of inflation and economic strife. And last, and definitely not least, this does not prevent nine to 10 months of trauma from accumulating (yes, for some women this is traumatic).

However, there are women whose lives are being put at risk due to pregnancy complications. Complications that could be remedied by emergency abortions. One of the questions raised by a story covered on NPR’s “Consider This” is how many women can make the trip out of state for those medical needs.

My question is this, if there are able-bodies that can restrict abortion then why are these able-bodies not signing bills to prevent doctors from refusing hysterectomies to

women who simply do not want children? Where are the able-bodies who can provide contraception to the communities short on resources? Why isn’t there a better sex education system than “don’t have sex?”

Those in positions of power want to put these restrictions on people, and yet don’t give any options to substitute our rights. Yes, a woman should have a right to her body, especially in circumstances of trauma, like rape and incest.

What does this mean for women going forward? Unfortunately, there are no answers yet. We sit and we wait, however there are some women who simply cannot wait.

Kristen Scheaffer is a staff reporter and may be reached at kmscheaffer@miners.utep.edu.

Pornography and the harmful effects it has on women

BY JULIA LUCERO
The Prospector

Porn used to be a taboo topic. People may have felt shame in admitting they watched porn or participated in it. However there has been in a shift in people’s view on pornography.

For some, porn is viewed as an empowering sentiment made for women to take control of their sexuality. According to Pornhub’s 2021 annual statistics review revealed that worldwide 32% of porn viewers were women.

While this may be true for some, people fail to realize the harmful effects the porn industry has on women. The porn industry is a breeding ground for causing poor mental health in women and depicting unrealistic body standards.

According to a scholarly article “Women’s Problematic Pornography Viewing Related to Body Image or Relationship Satisfaction,

Sexual Addiction & Compulsivity” by Nicholas C. Borgogna, Emma C. Lathan & Ariana Mitchell found that women who watch porn are more likely to feel dissatisfied with their body image.

Almost every female porn star is seen with big breasts, voluminous butt, full lips and a small waist.

This standard of beauty is impossible for some women to achieve naturally, making it difficult and unfair for women to see these videos and feel they are not pretty or sexy enough.

Each woman is beautiful in her own unique way, but porn pushes the idea that there is only one kind of sexy.

“Thus, women who view pornography may experience feelings of dissatisfaction about their own bodies, which can in turn lead to additional life problems, such as low self-esteem, depression, feelings of shame, decreases in overall life quality, and issues related to sexual

functioning people whose partners watch porn,” the study read.

There are substantial issues pornography has on a young girls view on sex.

In the U.S 62% of girls before the ages of 18 are exposed to porn, Bevil & Associates Professional Forensic Counseling reported.

In the study “The Impact of Internet Pornography on Adolescents: A Review of the Research, Sexual Addiction & Compulsivity” Eric W. Owens, Richard J. Behun, Jill C. Manning & Rory C. Reid found that young adolescents who watch porn develop unrealistic attitudes about sex and misleading attitudes towards relationships.

The article showed adolescents who watch porn view sex as something casual rather than something serious and relational.

Sex means something different for everyone but young women should be able to decide for themselves what sex means to them instead



Julia Lucero

of having porn teach them what it should be.

Even further, pornography has the potential to affect women who do not consume the graphic content themselves. According to Utah University State University Couple and Family Relationships Director Naomi Brower, pornography affects both the user and partner in intimate relationships.

“The user faces difficulty becoming sexually aroused without pornography, partner feels sexually inadequate and threatened by pornography and both user and partner experience a decrease in relationship sexual satisfaction and emotional closeness,” the article stated.

Sure, for some women porn is a plight to be in control of their sexuality and financial freedom, but the reality is that porn is a much larger issue than it is led on to be. The beauty standards and view on sex it possesses is only the beginning to fully understanding the role it plays in society and treatment of women.

Think before consuming or sharing, to fully and truly understand that pornography is not a positive aspect in every woman’s life.

Julia Lucero is a contributor and may be reached at jlucero13@miners.utep.edu.

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Texas Sen. Cesar Blanco unveils the UT Promise Plus program at the Larry K. Durham Center on Wed., March 9. **Photo by Carolina Uribarri/The Prospector**

UT Promise Plus reduces tuition fee for students

BY KRISTEN SCHEAFFER
The Prospector

The UT System Board of Regents created a \$300 million endowment as a means to reduce the cost of higher education for undergraduates at seven UT institutions, including UTEP.

The UT system and UTEP leaders along with elected officials met with the community and UTEP students to announce details behind the Promise Plus program.

The Promise Plus program is a means to provide tuition assistance to qualifying students among the seven UT schools: UT Arlington, UT Dallas, UT El Paso, UT Permian Basin, UT Rio Grande Valley, UT San Antonio, and UT Tyler. The funding came from several investments coming in from UT system financial officers where their returns produced more than anticipated in the previous fiscal year. This led to the Board of Regents approving the endowment, according to the University of Texas System.

During the announcement, UTEP was met by their own President Heather Wilson, along with El Paso Mayor Oscar Leeser, UT System Chancellor James Milliken, and Texas Sen. Cesar Blanco, who is a UTEP alumnus.

“I know firsthand the endless opportunities that this institution brings to our careers and to our community. And I see myself in you all that are sitting here in t-shirts, the students that are here because I was one of those kids sitting at the Union,” Blanco said.

UTEP is currently recognized as a Tier 1 (R1) Research University that was recognized by the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education as well as one out of 19 Hispanic-Serving institutions to be recognized by

the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. With this newly founded endowment, opportunities will be open to more students across campus.

UTEP’s current tuition program, Paydirt Promise, covers tuition costs for students whose families make less than \$60,000 gross incomes. The endowment, which will be distributed annually, is expected to produce about \$2.5 million in the first year (about \$15 million between the seven institutions, a minimum of \$1 million depending on the number of students with financial need). This will raise the family’s threshold to \$75,000, according to UTEP’s Division of Marketing and Communications

The endowment is expected to grow with time. Those eligible for the funds must be full-time undergraduate students. They must be Texas residents and already applied and qualified for need-based aid through FAFSA, according to the University of Texas System.

“Our mission here is to increase access to excellent education,” said Wilson.

UTEP is unique due to its region, according to Wilson. UTEP brings the communities of west Texas, southern New Mexico, and Ciudad Juárez together with one goal shared: a higher education.

“It truly is a momentous occasion, not just for the various institutions that the program is going to benefit and the students, but specifically, here in El Paso. Here at UTEP, because it’s going to impact generations of miners and future miners,” Blanco said.

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Gender studies panel showcases feminist trailblazers at UTEP

BY MARIA L. GUERRERO DURAN
The Prospector

The Women’s and Gender Studies Department commenced its annual conference honored by the panel titled of “Feminist Trailblazers and Pathfinders” at UTEP March 21-22 at UTEP. The panel was an opportunity for the UTEP community to get to know and learn about the renowned trajectories of faculty and staff; Mimi Gladstein Ph.D., Sandra McGee Deutsch, Ph.D., and Yolanda Chavez Leyva, Ph.D., and Dee Woo.

Gladstein is known for her involvement with the College of Liberal Arts and her activism towards women’s opportunities in education. She is also known for being former chair of the English Department, former chair of the Theater, Dance and Film Department, and the first director of the Women’s and Gender Studies Department.

Gladstein is known among her students and colleagues as a leader, who always strives to bring out the potential of the UTEP community.

One of her biggest accomplishments in education was to achieve equal pay rates at the university back in the 1980s. She sued the University for discriminatory employment practices based upon sex, resulting in women getting paid less than men in similar positions.

With her involvement in the UTEP community, she aims to set a great example for faculty, staff, and students. She has not only encouraged her students to seek an education, but to be in love with what they do, and fight for what they stand for.

“Students came to me, when I was an undergraduate advisor, you know, Dr. Gladstein, I’m interested in this. Still, my parents think if I want a career, I should be an accountant or I should be the standard or the other. And I said to them, how much is your life worth to you?” said Gladstein.

“I said, you know, I like the weekends. But I’m happy when Monday comes, too. How would you like it if all your life you dreaded the week to come? Do you dread going into your work? You know, is it worth it?”

Deutsch is known in the History Department as a professor with a



From left to right, Mimi Gladstein Ph.D., Sandra Deutsch Ph.D., and Yolanda Leyva, Ph.D. **Courtesy photos.**

strong value system, and as a professor who is not afraid to stand up against ideologies that might affect an individual’s dignity, even if this means to publicly correct her students. She has written and published three books. She specializes in Latin American fascism and antifascism, and women and gender in Latin America.

Coming from a family who survived the Holocaust, she grew up surrounded by history, and after her mother contacted family in Latin America, Deutsch became interested in the region. During her visit in Argentina as a scholar, she encountered the fascist ideology among her peers, which made her take the decision to focus on the topic. She made it a goal of hers to perform research to understand antisemitism and its motives, as a response to the suffering of her parents.

As a first-generation college graduate, she was encouraged by her parents, despite their old school conservatism to seek higher education. Thus, she made it her goal to encourage her students, especially women to have big goals set and a motive of action.

“I have always encouraged the department (of history) to really look closely at the women candidates, because unfortunately in the past and even now we have been a majority male department, and that does not reflect the percentage of men and women who get history Ph.D. degrees,” said Deutsch.

Chavez Leyva serves as the director of the Institute of Oral History, director of the Borderlands Public History Lab, and associate professor of the History Department. Aside from her work at UTEP, she has her website Fierce Fronteriza, in which she shares her work showcasing women and the borderland area.

“I have gathered stories as an historian, working in archives and libraries. But most meaningfully I have listened to the stories of border people, of fronterizos. I have shared these histories through history projects ranging from museum exhibits to dialogues to podcasts,” wrote Leyva on her blog.

She has 14 publications, in which she compiles narratives from women, immigrants at the borderland and native culture. She also has blog entries, in which she discusses the struggles people have in the area, such as the 2019 Walmart Shooting.

Woo has worked as KTEP’s operations director and has been in the broadcasting business for over three decades. Graduating from UTEP with a degree in mass communication, she went on to work for Channel 4 in El Paso and radio stations in Arizona according to KTEP

Despite her not being a professor, she has impacted UTEP students and KTEP listeners in a big way.

“Dee has been at KTEP for many years, so much that when she was away during the pandemic, listeners called during my shift asking for her,” said former KTEP intern Victoria Almaguer. “Her resilience and strength continuing to work for KTEP no matter what life throws at her inspires me.”

To learn more about the Institute of Oral History and access these recordings, visit <https://www.utep.edu/liberalarts/oral-history/>.

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A primer on UTEP Student Government Association

BY EDUARDO A. FLORES
The Prospector

Over the years, the Student Government Association (SGA) mission has been to represent all UTEP students by providing an official voice.

By working together with the administration for the advancement of the University community, SGA has also ensured student participation in decision-making processes and helped defend the rights of each student.

The UTEP SGA is organized into three separate but equal branches: the Executive, Legislative, and Judicial.

The Executive Branch oversees the Legislative Branch and administers the daily operations of the organization. In this branch, there are three officials: a president, a vice president for internal affairs, a vice president for external affairs, and an appointee to serve as executive assistant.

Some of the powers of the president include acting as the chief executive officer of the SGA, nominating or appointing student(s) to serve on Faculty Senate committees or boards, and serving as the UTEP SGA representative at the University of Texas System Student Advisory Council (UT SAAC).

The vice-president for internal affairs also holds several powers, including presiding over Senate sessions, assuming the presidency in cases where the president's office is vacant, and calling special Senate sessions with 48 hours' notice.

The vice-president for external



Senator at Large Erika Lopez (left) and Senator at Large Cira Vera (right) oversee SGA's weekly meeting on March 3, 2022. Photo by Alberto Silva Fernandez/The Prospector

affairs acts as a liaison between the SGA and local, state, and national governments, as a coordinator to outside organizations seeking the support of SGA, and approves any publicity such as advertisements, flyers, banners, etc. for any project of SGA.

The executive assistant serves as the chief of staff and performs the duties as directed by the President.

The legislative branch is composed of a senate that consists of 25 senators and a Senate majority leader: 17 senators-at-large representing 1,000 students each and eight collegiate senators representing the eight colleges of UTEP.

The Senate passes bills and allocates funds to students and student organizations for university-related

projects, events, or travels. Senators also launch initiatives called "Special Projects" to resolve problems that students have experienced on campus. Legislative tasks are divided among many committees, which represent the concerns of the student body.

Aside from special projects, senators are also to be active in the ad-hoc and standing committees established by the Student Government Association, including appropriations funding, student application review committee (SARC), document review committee (DRC) EXCEL, outreach, and sustainability.

The judicial branch is the portion of the Student Government Association that decides cases arising from

the student community. Under the supervision of the attorney general, this branch is divided into two subparts: the supreme court justices and the traffic court justices.

Justices of the SGA Supreme Court moderate the balance between the executive and legislative branches while also attending hearings concerning elections during campaign weeks.

The traffic court provides students with the opportunity to appeal their parking ticket citations in an organized and moderated environment. The traffic court is composed of public defenders, prosecutors, a judicial assistant, and five justices that issue verdicts on student appeals.

Students also can join the EX-

CEL program to learn about the operations of SGA. EXCEL is a one-semester program that provides leadership and social skills to advance in their academic careers.

SGA general election will be held on April 11-14 where the President, Vice President of Internal and External, 16 Senator at Large, and 8 Collegiate Senator positions will be up for election.

For more information about the UTEP Student Government Association, email sga@utep.edu, call 915-747-5584, or visit utep.edu/sga.

Eduardo A. Flores is a contributor and may be reached at eaflares17@miners.utep.edu; @eduardo_aa_flores on Instagram; @floreseduardoa on Twitter.

JOURNALISTS from page 1

For photojournalist at the El Paso Times, Gabriela Velasquez, the support came straight from the men photographers who dominate sports photography here locally.

"My friends, they call themselves 'Los Photogs'; (a group of male photographers across different newspapers in El Paso), they've been really supportive," Velasquez

said. "Since the first day that I met them, they would give me tips, and even now even when I wasn't at The Prospector, they were just always super supportive."

With journalism constantly evolving, supporting women in journalism helps tell stories from different angles and allows for pieces to go beyond what we have imagined. For

Martha Pskowski, an environmental reporter at the El Paso Times, the challenge can be knowing what you want to write about and how you decide to tell those stories.

"Because the journalism industry is changing so rapidly it can be really hard to know where to put your energy or what medium is growing

or shrinking," Pskowski said. "Being able to make smart choices about what outlets to work with is just hard. The industry is like in upheaval all the time."

For all these women, there has always been a challenge and the challenges will not stop there, from deadlines to harassment, these women have pushed themselves to

be better and overcome adversity. They encourage all women studying journalism or wanting to enter the field to believe in who they are and not be afraid to ask questions.

"Don't ever doubt that you can't do it, because you 100% can," Phillips said.

Itzel Giron is the audience engagement editor and may be reached at iagiron@miners.utep.edu; @by.itzel.giron on Instagram; @itzel_anahi_16 on Twitter.

SORATGAR from page 1

structuring young women in English and sports at her house, despite the imminent risk of being discovered by the Taliban. One of her remarkable accomplishments and proof of womanhood spirit was teaching women how to walk without the burqa, during her after-hours fitness classes.

"On the first day of our exercise, when I asked them to run, they couldn't; I realized that they did not know how to run; they grew up with the tent (burqa) for five years, so we started learning to walk from zero," Soratgar said.

The day eventually came when Taliban gunmen forced their way into her house. Despite the alarming situation she was in, Soratgar confronted the men, questioning their so-called faith and ideology, resulting in her and her 8-year-old son being arrested. It was after intervention and protests from the community that they were set free. Soratgar responded by reopening

her secret homeschool.

Due to her passion and contributions to sports and the well-being of young women, she opened the first fitness center in Kabul, focusing not only on the physical health of her people, but on their mental health. She was also vice-president of the Afghanistan National Basketball Federation. Because of her involvement with the community through sports, the Afghan Olympic Athletes selected her as the flag bearer for the opening ceremony in Greece 2004.

As part of her education trajectory, she was a professor at Kabul Education University, where she taught Methodology of Teaching. During her years of professorship, she worked alongside other women to publish a series of transcripts from their think-tank meetings.

"We held meetings with some broad-minded and active students to enlighten and promulgate mutual tolerance until we could launch a

dialogue of tolerance in Kabul and other provinces," Soratgar said.

Soratgar met former first lady Laura Bush March 14 in Dallas to talk about women's ongoing situation in Afghanistan and her activism for women and children's education. This is not her first time meeting with the former First Lady. Sep. 24, 2002, Soratgar met former President George Bush, during a visit to the White House under the state department assistance program Afghan Women's Council. Fourteen women from different provinces of Afghanistan were elected to participate in this leadership and management program.

Later in 2007, she met Laura Bush, during a program that recruited Afghan professors, to visit the University of Nebraska at Omaha. This helped her have the initiative to contact her and speak on behalf of women and their demands in Afghanistan.

She published a book in June

2021 called "University and Inquiry" which exposes the educational situation of children in Afghanistan. With the book, she also seeks to enlighten society and raise minds against the Taliban ideology.

As Soratgar showed videos of her house vandalized by the Taliban gunmen, she explained that life under the Taliban life was unbearable, especially for her children.

"I have some friends out of Afghanistan, and one of them called me and asked about the situation in Afghanistan, and she campaigned for me in the United States, in Washington. Then, I fortunately received a job offer from UTEP," she said.

UTEP has given Soratgar the opportunity to do research with the Department of Women's and Gender Studies and decide whether she wants to pursue a Ph.D. or if she wants to become a lecturer for the department. Not only has

Soratgar found comfort under the wings of the university, but of the community and the city of El Paso as well, she said.

"The kindness of the people and the beautiful nature here remind me of my homeland and destroy my sense of alienation," Soratgar wrote in the speech presented to Laura Bush.

Soratgar believes that her input in global feminism, will be a great opportunity to share with UTEP students a multicultural scope and help them understand the worldwide situation of women and children.

Soratgar said she does her work to give moral support to other women, to show them not to be scared and to stand up.

"Instead of sitting and watching, it is better to do something," Soratgar said.

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Arts & Culture

Victoria Rivas, editor

Changing the world one color at a time

El Paso nail technician creatively connects with customers

BY KATRINA VILLARREAL
The Prospecter

Ivaneé Muñoz owner of A'Dior Nail company; has won the Best of El Paso award back-to-back for 2020 and 2021. Muñoz takes pride in the work she does on her clients and the services she provides as a friend.

Muñoz has been doing nails since she was 25 years old for more than six years, three years at her salon and more than three years at her old apartment. She realized she wanted to pursue this as a career when she was 18 and her cosmetology class started to learn about nails, she began to enjoy the art, but it ended shortly after. She was later contacted by her school to finish her education and gave her the chance to solely pursue nails; she was the first in her class to do just that.

"I didn't think that working outside of the house was going to blow up as much as it did," Muñoz said. "She ended up telling me that I was going to be the first of their class, if I was interested, for a manicurist program."

Doing nails was not always something Muñoz wanted to do; she wanted to be an actress on Broadway. Despite not pursuing acting, she explains how changing her



Ivaneé Muñoz, owner of A'Dior Nail Company, says she enjoys building a relationship with her clients and creating a new look for them. **Photo by Annabella Mireles/The Prospecter**

salon from time to time can be a lot like a sequel to a movie. When she was younger, Muñoz would watch her mom do her nails at the kitchen table, and she felt a certain calmness when she would watch her.

"I realized this is where my passion started when I was young, but it just did not follow through until I did it," Muñoz said. "I cannot tell you exactly what made me do it, but when I did it, I just knew that was the thing I wanted to do forever."

When Muñoz is doing nails, she is motivated by seeing her clients' reactions to getting their nails freshly done. Muñoz said she loves

her clients, which differentiates her salon from others, she offers her friendship besides her nail salon services. She builds a relationship with all her clients to where they feel comfortable enough to share a piece of their life with her.

"It's the best part of motivating every set I do. When they come in, they look a certain way, but when they leave, they do not look like when they came in, and that just pushes me," Muñoz said. "It's a breath of fresh air for not only me, but for them because I built that rapport and relationship where they can be themselves in my chair,

not only get their nails done, but they can say things that they haven't said in like forever."

For inspiration, Muñoz turns to her siblings, who she calls "the party of five." She explains they have been through so much in their life, but they have found a way to get through it and come out on top. Muñoz knows that whenever she is feeling down, she can call one of them no matter what.

"My family members and I have found a way to overcome that pain and that life that we have been dealt, and use it for good, use it to help people and use it to feel right,"

Muñoz said. "The fact that my siblings can just continue to strive for what they believe in, and what they love, and what they do, pushes me all the time. They have just inspired me to continue to be better and just give mom and dad what they would have wanted, to live their legacy and be strong for them, that's what my parents would want it."

Muñoz has always been a one-woman show; she runs her business and is a single mom. She explains that her biggest achievement is finding a balance between the two. During her career, she has had people come learn with her and later go off and open their own business, making her happy.

"I have had people come and go, that's for sure, but one thing I can say is that when they do go, they go out successful and they make something of themselves," Muñoz said. "That's something that I'm proud of, but it's always been me, hard work and all."

The name A'Dior Nail Company was inspired by her two kids; she took the initial of her daughter's first name and her middle name for A'Dior and her son's first and middle initials for Nail Company.

Muñoz advises aspiring nail technicians, to respect themselves and their artwork.

"Trust your passion because without that, there is nothing, there's no money, there is no love, there are no clients, and without those three important things, what do you have?"

Katrina Villarreal is a staff reporter and may be reached at kvillarreal1@miners.utep.edu.

Top books for Women's History Month

BY ELISHA NUNEZ
The Prospecter

March is Women's History Month and commemorates the accomplishments and sacrifices of female icons throughout history. Female authors, civil rights activists, philosophers, engineers, and many more are celebrated during this month. For this article, we will be listing a couple of reading essentials that reflect the essence of what it means to be female and the history behind various female figures from history.

"Circe" by Madeleine Miller

We begin our list with an entry that presents itself as an adaptation from various Greek myths, namely that of Homer's "Odyssey." The book speaks of the events in the "Odyssey" from the perspective of Circe, an enchantress and minor goddess in Greek mythology. Written by Madeleine Miller and published in 2018, this book explores female empowerment and follows a character through an emotional journey, who eventually discovers how to hold up in the end.

"The Feminine Mystique" by Betty Friedan

For this entry in our list, we will be taking it back in time, 59 years to be exact. "The Feminine Mystique" is a book written by Betty Friedan, and is recognized for beginning second-wave feminism in the late 20th Century. The book was first published in February 1963, and sold over a million copies. Friedan wrote "The Feminine Mystique" to draw attention to women who lived as housewives, and to describe the absurdity of how "feminine" women should not want a career, an education, and should not be allowed to have a political opinion.

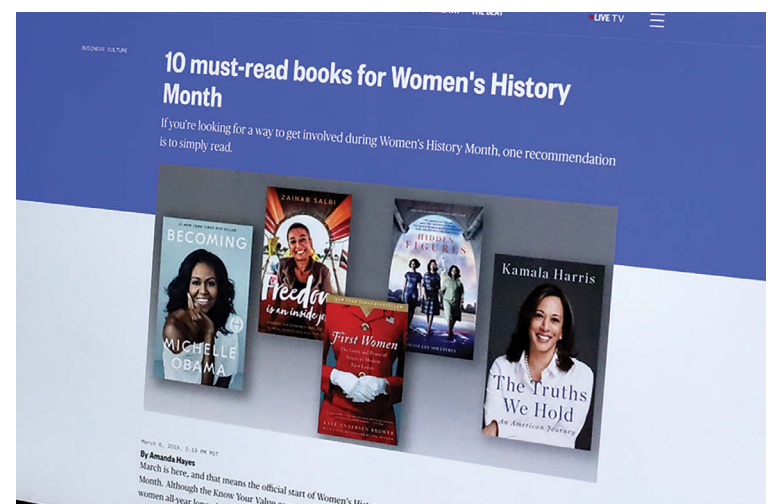
"Little Women" by Lousia May Alcott

Another icon in American literature, "Little Women," presents the audience with a coming-of-age story based on the author herself, Lousia May Alcott. The book is classified as an autobiographical or semi-autobiographical novel, since it is based on Alcott's experiences

with her sisters. This novel digs deep into Alcott's experiences on becoming a woman, while integrating messages of domesticity, work and true love. First published in 1868, "Little Women," has been acknowledged as an early example of strong female presence in literature.

"I Am Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter" by Erika Sanchez

"I Am Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter" brings Latina struggles to the forefront including, stereotypes of growing up in a Mexican-American household. Published in 2017 and written by Erika Sanchez, this book follows Julia, a young Mexican-American woman whose sister, Olga, just passed away in an accident. Instead of acknowledging her pain and fight to keep the family together, Julia's mother continues to point out every one of her mistakes while demeaning her as an imperfect Mexican daughter, unlike her sister. This book is definitely one to read for young Latinas who struggle to keep up with family issues.



UTEP's students prepare to read inspiring books written by women from different eras for Women's History Month. **Photo by Annabella Mireles/The Prospecter**

"Hidden Figures" by Margot Lee Shetterly

Our last entry on the list presents the shaky and conflict-filled past of the United States' fight in The Cold War. "Hidden Figures: The American Dream and the Untold Story of the Black Women Who Helped Win the Space Race" recounts the story of three black female mathematicians, who faced plenty of discrimination in their

road to becoming some of the most renowned women in the world. Written by Margot Lee Shetterly, this book provides insight on the behind-the-scenes of NASA during the space race, and documents these women's journey from unnoticed to famous in a matter of years.

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Among the many products sold at Love Alumni Boutique include candles created by Plumcandles. Photo by Annabella Mireles/The Prospector



Mckinney sells many products from local women owned brands including hand-made earrings. Photo by Annabella Mireles/The Prospector

Love Alumni Boutique empowers women

BY ALYSON RODRIGUEZ
The Prospector

A local woman has transformed the lives of many small businesses owned by women by opening not only her heart but her store to showcase their products.

Malorie Mckinney is the CEO and founder of Love Alumni Boutique. Mckinney co-founded the business with her husband Dre March 26, 2021. After having trouble with their first choice of venue, they decided to think outside the box and upcycled an old ice cream truck and transform to El Paso's first mobile boutique.

The boutique showcases 40 women entrepreneurs that Mckinney

handpicked. Products sold include candles, stationery, jewelry, clothes, stickers, buttons, shoes, planters, and more. Prices for products range based on the vendor.

Mckinney learned from other local female business owners that they have all experienced similar struggles when running their business, such as people not respecting them and their work and the struggles that come with running a business while raising small children. Mckinney, at first, only wanted to focus on her own art and products, but after she and her husband started to fix up the bus, they realized that they had a lot of room for other women's work.

"Love Alumni boutique is the much-needed space that women small business owners needed," said Mckinney. "We have jewelry and clothing designers, artists, and artisans. We sell a little bit of everything. This boutique has expanded way bigger than I'd ever imagined."

Future plans for Love Alumni Boutique include, opening a website for customers to shop online. This summer, the boutique will provide classes to kids to teach them how to start a business. Mckinney and her husband would also like to create a summer lunch program for underprivileged kids. Another goal for Mckinney is to one day

establish a nonprofit that provides micro-funding to small women-owned businesses.

"I always remember what I needed when I was first starting my small business," said Mckinney. "I was struggling terribly in the beginning, and nobody wanted to give me a chance. I was trying to grow my jewelry business and needed better supplies. I would like to provide that avenue for women business owners. Even if it's a small amount it will still help someone's growth. My mom and grandma always used to say the little bit that you have can be a blessing to a lot of people. I try to remember that when running my business."

The grand opening of her new store will be held on March 26 from 12-6 p.m. where they will also be celebrating the one-year anniversary of the creation of the boutique. Everyone is welcomed for food, live music, and activities.

The boutique bus will have pop-up on Sunday, March 27, at the Chuco Market, 3750 Gateway Blvd. To learn more about Love Alumni Boutique follow it on Instagram @lovealumniboutique. The boutique is located at 2105 E. Yandell Drive and the hours of operation are noon to 6 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday.

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Female-founded rescue, saves dogs from Juárez

BY ELISHA NUNEZ
The Prospector

El Paso's Bridge Pups Rescue focuses on saving dogs who cross the international bridge from Ciudad

Juárez to El Paso, and are committed on finding them a new home.

According to Ruby Montana, the founder of Bridge Pups Rescue, who along with her brother, run the

organization, said the rescue was founded around 2013 or 2014.

Ruby and her brother have a huge love for animals, which led them to rescue strays in the first place.

"We really have no choice; it's just who we are," Montana said. "There's no way that we could see a dog in need and say no because we, unfortunately, know that if we don't do it, chances are that no one else will. So it's pretty much that there's no choice for us; we feel like we have to help every living being that we can. I wish people just cared more about not just dogs but about all animals."

Caring for animals is a big commitment for Montana, when she is not lecturing at UTEP in humanities or teaching at EPCC, she's saving strays that cross the bridge.

Her brother, Matthew, works for the U.S. Customs and Border Protection, which allows him to spot strays crossing the bridge into El Paso. After Matthew rescues the strays, it is up to Montana to search for foster homes willing to house the dogs or cats, until someone decides to take them home.

Over the years since the rescue started, they have managed to rescue more than 20 stray dogs and at least two cats that crossed the bridge, and they do not plan on

stopping.

With all the work put into rescuing animals over the years, it is amazing how much Bridge Pups Rescue has done. However, it seems that the rescue is struggling with a lack of immediate resources, which has taken a toll on Montana.

"It's a priority, you know, even though you don't get paid or anything," said Montana. "You know, there are often times where it is really frustrating, and it is really hard, and there are times where I just breakdown crying because I don't have enough help, or I don't have enough funds or I don't have a foster, but all those times just don't even matter when I see the dogs get their happy ending, that's what makes it all worth it for me."

Montana plans to make the rescue a completely non-profit organization, and knows that it will require a lot of help from the community to make it possible.

"Right now, we just rely on the kindness of strangers to help us as fosters, that's probably the biggest challenge aside from [getting] donations," said Montana. "Unfortunately, we don't have any immediate plans [for the rescue], my brother obviously has a career with CBP, and I have my own career, you know as a teacher, but we'll never

not do this. We plan to continue with the Bridge Pups Rescue for as long as we live, as long as we can."

The most popular methods of helping the rescue consist of volunteering, donating or by fostering strays.

"Volunteers would do things such as picking up the dogs from the bridges, or taking the dogs to their foster homes and delivering supplies to the fosters, taking the dogs to their vet appointments or even just being fosters themselves," Montana said. "So that's really what we need the most help with from our volunteers and if they can't foster that's fine. Any of those other things are really helpful because, with my busy work schedule and my brother's busy work schedule, we just can't do it all. We do have another team member, Justin Hamill, but he is leaving the country for two months, which makes our need for another team member all the more imminent, I suppose."

If El Pasoans wish to apply to be a volunteer or want to make a donation, visit Bridge Pups Rescue accounts on Facebook and Instagram or at bridgepups@gmail.com.

Elisha Nunez is a contributor and may be reached at egnunez2@miners.utep.edu.

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Sports

Emily Autumn Velasquez, editor

Krishna Jayasankar goes the distance

BY KATRINA VILLARREAL
THE PROSPECTOR



Krishna Jayasankar is a kinesiology major who represents UTEP as a track and field thrower. Jayasankar recently won silver in the women's shot put event at the Conference USA indoor track and field championship in Alabama. **Photo by Annabella Mireles/The Prospector**

Krishna Jayasankar Menon, UTEP track and field thrower, is the first female thrower from India to receive a Division I scholarship, marking only the beginning of her athletic career at UTEP.

Jayasankar, a freshman majoring in kinesiology, was chosen by UTEP to represent the Miners for her outstanding numbers and ranking in Asia and the world.

"I got a scholarship opportunity and it's always been my dream to come to the United States," Jayasankar said. "UTEP was the best times and institutions, I said, 'you know what, let me grab the opportunity.'"

Jayasankar grew up in the world of sports, as her dad is a nation all-star, and her mom coaches a basketball team in India.

Jayasankar originally wanted to pursue tennis. However, after being approached in fifth grade by a teacher who said her height was good for shot put, she got into

track and has been doing it for 10 years. That same teacher became her coach in high school. "I always believed that my parents didn't get their due. So therefore, I said, 'let me try another sport,'" Jayasankar said. "Things eventually transpired, and I started winning my school nationals. I threw over the meter (at the meet) but there was another girl who threw over me; her record was the new meet record and mine was better than the original meet record."

Jayasankar first realized she wanted to pursue track after she realized the recognition and opportunities that come with competing. There was a moment in high school, when the same teacher who recruited her for track, did not sign up Jayasankar to compete due to already having someone else entered in the under 18 category. Instead of conforming with the idea of not competing, Jayasankar took it upon herself to prove she was deserving

of an entry. Jayasankar went on to compete in the under 20 category at the CBC nationals as the youngest in the category where she came in fourth place. The following year she was able to compete in her own category, under 18, taking home gold.

"All of the girls were older, and I was the youngest in there I came fourth," Jayasankar said. "So that's when I said, you know what I'm going to take this seriously because I have the talent and the potentiality because I was very young, and I was able to compete with all the competitors who are older than me."

Jayasankar's inspiration and motivation comes from the sacrifices she has made and from those who surround her.

"I think it's my family, the drive to not to give up and it's the sacrifices that keep reminding me that you're here for a purpose and you have to push yourself," Jayasankar said.

Jayasankar took a chance on herself by deciding to take a year off from school to train in Jamaica for seven months. This decision and training ultimately led her to a sports scholarship at UTEP.

For Jayasankar, track is a mental game, and just like any other sport it is something that takes mental toughness.

"I don't have a particular person who inspires me, I get inspired by everybody like I see I get inspired by Tobi (Amusan)," Jayasankar said. "As you see, Tobi works really hard to be the best and to be what she is. There's mental toughness. You just have to have faith in yourself, believe in yourself and tell yourself that you can do it."

Jayasankar enjoys the competitiveness track brings to her life, as an individual sport that piques her interest. Particularly, the interest the sport brings her as she supports her teammates and watches other events.

"I always thank my competitors because if they were not there, if they're not pushing me then I would not push myself," Jayasankar said. "I get to see a lot of things, I get to see people jump, I get to see people run, I get to see people throw. You don't get to see this in any other sport. You know there's no repetitiveness in a way."

Jayasankar's journey at UTEP is only the beginning for her, as she hopes to represent India at the 2024 Olympics and medal at the national championships for the NCAA.

"Olympics is always the aim," Jayasankar said.

Jayasankar and UTEP track and field prepare to head to Tempe, Arizona for the Sun Angel Invite from Thursday, April 7 to Saturday, April 9.

Katrina Villarreal is a staff reporter and may be reached at kvillarreal1@miners.utep.edu.

UTEP women athletes score season milestones

BY KATRINA VILLARREAL
The Prospector

From current President Heather Wilson to making up more than 50% of the student population, women at UTEP continue to contribute to the success of the institution in academics. It comes as no surprise; they are also paving the way in sports.

From the first female coach Carol Ammerman to track and field champions like Melinda Sergent

and Blessing Okagbare, UTEP women athletes have had a history of reaching career-highs along with earning conference accolades in their sport.

Below are some of the top women athletes paving the way for the Miners this year.

The UTEP women's basketball team closed its season Tuesday, March 8, it finished the season 14-15, and 6-12 in Conference USA. The top Miners this season include sophomore guard Katia Gallegos

and junior guard Destiny Thurman.

Gallegos was named All-Conference USA Second Team for the 2021-22 season, averaging 11.6 points, 3.9 assists, 3.2 rebounds, and 1.8 steals per game. Gallegos currently leads the Miners in assists (111), steals (52), blocks (11), field goals made (105), and free throws made (89) this season. The civil engineering major set multiple season-highs in the game against New Mexico State University Dec. 15 with 26 points, 16 free throws

made, and 20 free throw attempts.

Thurman received an honorable mention for the All-Conference USA team for the 2021-22 season. This is the first time she has been recognized by C-USA in postseason awards. Thurman leads the Miners in scoring with 13.0 points and in 3-pointers with 37; she averages 3.1 rebounds and 1.2 steals per game. During a game against North Texas on Feb. 3, Thurman recorded a career-high of 30 points becoming the first Miner to reach

30 points since Sparkle Taylor.

As the UTEP golf team continues its season, two athletes on the team have recorded big numbers throughout the season: French natives sophomore Ines Dakiche and junior Sophie Delfosse.

During the 2021-22, Dakiche competed in four tournaments for 12 rounds where she recorded 965 strokes for an average of 80.4. In her career as a Miner, Dakiche has

see **TOP ATHLETES** on page 8

COMMENTARY

The challenges of being a woman in sports

BY EMILY AUTUMN VELASQUEZ
The Prospector

While there have been a lot of steps in the right direction for women being accepted into sports, there is still a lot of room for both improvement and change.

Sports journalism is an industry that needs to see more change as it is a male-dominated field. The majority of commentators, writers, and talk show hosts are males, and while there are some women in the field, they do not seem to have the same respect.

The fact that nine times out of 10, when a woman knows sports, it is surprising, shocking, or “great to see,” is a problem.

Especially considering that when it comes to men, it is expected for them to have a rounded knowledge of sports and never something that



Emily Autumn Velasquez

people second guess or feel the need to test.

While it is becoming more common to see women in sports, the same level of respect is not there.

A lot of people were excited when

we finally started to see female officials in sports, but most of the time they are not seen calling the big games like the Super Bowl; they are only allowed the regular season games that do not have as much weight if a mistake is made.

Another bothersome thing is you rarely see female commentators for male-dominated sports such as the National Football League or National Basketball Association. They are usually seen as co-hosts on talk shows or as reporters on the sidelines who do halftime interviews. Why are women rarely the ones calling the game alongside the other professionals?

We do not talk enough about why men’s teams take priority over women sports. Everyone talks about the NBA game they watched the night before, but no one ever

mentions the WNBA games that were on.

Another thing that women struggle within the sports industry is the wage gap. Many female athletes are competing at the same level, putting in the same amount of work, and working just as hard... but the difference in their contracts and pay checks is undeniable.

Athletes get paid a lot of money as it is, but the pay should be fair. The same goes for journalism. Commentators are awarded huge contracts for jobs in which women are not even considered. When there are multiple hosts of a show, the ones who have played the sport are instantly paid more, even if a woman has arguably the same amount, if not more, knowledge on the topic.

From the way the U.S. women’s

soccer team had to sue to receive equal pay comparable to the men’s team when the women have been more successful lately, is not something that should be taken lightly.

The fact that a court had to decide that the women were just as deserving because the league could not do so on their own says a lot to prove that while we have made progress, we have not done enough.

There is room for a lot of things to be changed in the sports industry so women are granted a more comfortable place for involvement in sports, both as athletes, reporters, and commentators. Women need to be able to feel just as welcomed as the men in the industry.

Emily Autumn Velasquez is the sports editor and may be reached at eavelasquez@miners.utep.edu.

A look at the female coaches who shaped sports at UTEP

BY DANIEL ALEC LOPEZ
The Prospector

UTEP has had quite a history of head coaches and assistant female coaches over the years and are being recognized for the hard work and effort they put into the athletic programs each year. Whether it be basketball, softball, or tennis, these coaches do all they can to help these athletes play to the best of their abilities.

UTEP had its first female head coach in the year 1975 and that was Carol Ammerman. After Ammerman, the next female coach was Janet Wood, who coached from 1978-1986.

The two coaches eclipsed 13 wins, keeping the Miners winning most of the time.

Since then, UTEP has had successful female head coaches, including former head coach Keitha Adams. Adams was the winningest female head coach in UTEP women’s basketball history. She coached the Lady Miners from 2001-2017. She was also responsible for both Lady Miners NCAA tournament appearances in 2008 and 2012.

Adams is considered one of the most successful female head coaches at UTEP due to her having a high winning percentage in her 17 years as head coach.

There are head coaches in general going from the Women’s National Basketball Association to the United States Specialty Sports Association softball leagues that do

a phenomenal job on their part to make the team good.

In football and in men’s basketball, there is few female head coaches and assistants, and is where some say the environment is not very welcoming.

When doing an interview with Track & Field Assistant Head Coach Lacena Golding-Clarke, she explained what it is like to be a coach in a male-dominated environment.

“It has been hard. I am not going to lie, yes, it is a male-dominated sport,” Golding-Clarke said. “A lot of student athletes coming from high school are expecting to have a male coach in college. And so, for me I think, just getting them

to trust me and to even come to school here and coach them has been a challenge.”

What brought Golding-Clarke to UTEP was both her and her husband getting the same job.

“I think what brought me here, is because my husband and I got the job together, he was at North Carolina Chapel-Hill, while I was at UT Austin, I think both of us getting the job here (UTEP) brought us to El Paso.”

When asked what made her want to be a coach, she said she believes in herself and she’s good at what she does.

“I think that I believe in myself most of all, what I’ve learned throughout the years from my

mentors, I believe I am one of the best in college athletics especially in sprint hurdles, I think that is one of things that drew me into coaching because I absolutely know what I am doing.”

And finally, when asked about what advice she had for upcoming female coaches, she gave this answer on what it takes to become a coach.

“I would just continue to strive for whatever position you’re trying to get to, just believe in yourself, have that commitment and self-belief and get to know your athletes, trust your athlete’s and the ones you’re trying to recruit,” Golding-Clarke said.

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TOP ATHLETES from page 7

competed in eight tournaments for 24 rounds where she recorded 1,878 strokes for an average of 78.3. She has a low round of 72 and a best 54 of 224.

Delfosse was named the C-USA golfer of the week on March 2. In the 2021-22 season, she competed in seven tournaments for 12 rounds where she recorded 1,570 strokes for an average of 74.8, a low round of 69 and a best 54 of 217. In her career as a Miner, she has competed

in 17 tournaments for 50 rounds where she recorded 3,754 strokes for an average of 75.1. Delfosse has a low round of 69 and a best 54 of 213.

In the the softball world, as the season continues with the Miners 9-11 and 0-0 C-USA, two players have had great seasons so far including redshirt junior Pate Cathey and sophomore outfielder Lexi Morales.

Cathey leads the Miners in batting with an average of .361 on 22 hits,

including slugging .574 with an on-base percentage of .388 and three walks. She also leads with 35 total bases. In national ranks, Cathey is 28th in doubles and 32nd in sacrifice flies. Cathey also recorded multiple season highs against UIW on March 5 including, home runs (one), runs scored (two) and runs batted in (five).

Cathey is followed closely by Morales, who has a batting average of .351 on 20 hits and slugging .439

with an on-base percentage of .464. Morales recorded multiple season highs against UIW on March 5 and March 6 including, home runs (one), runs batted in (three), and doubles (one).

The volleyball team closed out the season in December after a historic season, with a record of 24-8, 8-4 C-USA. This was the first winning season for the Miners since 2012, with the best season record since 2005. The Miners had outstanding

players, including junior outside hitter/middle blocker Alianza Darley and senior outside hitter Serena Patterson.

As the sport seasons continue and come to an end; fans can rest assured games are in good hands as the UTEP women athletes continue to score milestones.

All stats for each player found on the UTEP Athletics website.

Katrina Villarreal is a staff reporter and may be reached at kvillarreal1@miners.utep.edu.

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