We’re days away from commencement – one of the most important days in your life. Many of you who will cross the stage started at UTEP the same time I did. There are moments when it seems like a long time ago, and others when I’m amazed at how fast the last four years have gone. There are about 3,000 graduates who will cross the stage in a few weeks. Two things are likely true for all of you.

First, you are not the same person you were before you started here. You’ve learned new skills, developed a deeper awareness of yourself and the world, and stepped up to confront unprecedented challenges like the COVID-19 pandemic. Ideally, you have become a better version of yourself.

Second, none of you got here alone. It may have been parents and grandparents, spouses and friends, mentors and teachers who helped you when you needed it. The appropriate response to that help is gratitude. Simple gratitude. Amid the hubbub of finals, graduation photos, and celebrations, I hope you take a moment to thank those who helped you on your journey.

No matter what, you will always be a UTEP Miner. We want you to stay in touch with us and with each other as you start a new chapter of your life. There are many ways to stay involved as an alumnus and a community member, and remember this: you will always have a home here at UTEP.

Congratulations to each of you and to your families.

Dr. Heather Wilson
President

MAY 2, 2023
VOL. 108, NO. 16
A goodbye I wish I did not have to say yet

I have been putting off writing this because it is both sweet and bittersweet to give you a place to go that you have so many amazing memories and friends, but part of the journey is the end. Throughout my college career I have been (almost) everywhere, from San Antonio to Oklahoma, but I am happy to say I was able to find a place to call home.

Deciding to come back to college and attend UTEP was honestly the best decision I have ever made. I was terrified but nervous because I have never written in AP style. The submissions I sent were all from a technical writing class I took in San Antonio. I am so glad that we are graduating now than never. You have been there for me through thick and thin and I know I can always count on you both. You both have helped me put myself out there by pushing me to my greatest abilities. Thank you both for helping me out of my comfort zone, but most of all thank you for being my best friends. I could not have asked for anyone better. The revolution, it has been fun and thank you for welcoming me with open arms. You all know I will always go on to do remarkable things. To my wonderful family, thank you for the endless support and always cheering me on. Mom and dad this is for you. I hope and plan to continue to make you the proud parents on earth. I do not know where I would be without you.

Thank you for supporting me every time I wanted to transfer to another college and thank you for helping me achieve my dreams; everything that I am is because of the both of you. To my brother, thank you for introducing me to football and teaching me about the game; I will forever cherish the memories when we sat in mom and dad’s room to watch football. Sister, we did it. I am so glad that we are graduating together; I would not have wanted to go through this journey with anyone else but you. You have been my rock through it all and I am so glad that God blessed me with an amazing sister like you.

I am so glad that we are graduating now than never. You have been there for me through thick and thin and I know I can always count on you both. You both have helped me put myself out there by pushing me to my greatest abilities. Thank you both for helping me out of my comfort zone, but most of all thank you for being my best friends. I could not have asked for anyone better. The revolution, it has been fun and thank you for welcoming me with open arms. You all know I will always go on to do remarkable things. To my wonderful family, thank you for the endless support and always cheering me on. Mom and dad this is for you. I hope and plan to continue to make you the proud parents on earth. I do not know where I would be without you.

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To anyone reading this, college is stressful, but it is full of beautiful memories, cherish every single moment of it. As one of my favorite Formula 1 drivers, Daniel Ricciardo says, “Enjoy the butterflies, enjoy the nerves, the pressure. There’s a lot of worldly people in this place who you can laugh with, learn from, enjoy some moments with. So, embrace the good ones. Stay focused.”

To the class of 2023, congratulations. Let us keep working towards our goals and never give up. Lastly to UTEP, thank you for the memories and opportunities. I am grateful for it all, it has truly been a wonderful journey and now I am ready for the next chapter.

Goodbye UTEP. Hello Arizona.
A new journey awaits me

My time at UTEP has been a rollercoaster of a journey. I remember coming in during COVID and feeling lost and unsure of what I wanted to do. But I knew it would all fit together if I was doing what I was passionate about.

I remember applying for a position for The Prospector and Minero Magazine. Doing this opened so many opportunities for me and truly enlightened my skills as a photographer and writer. I also remember joining the UTEP marching band and flute choir. Band will forever be a large part of my life and I am so grateful for the doors that have opened for me because of music.

Cut to three years later and I could not be happier of how much I have grown as a person, musician, business owner, student and photographer.

This all would not have been possible without the support of my friends and family, but I especially cannot thank my dad enough. He has always pushed me to be the best version of what I can be and has never hesitated to help me despite the craziness I may ask from him. He is truly my biggest inspiration creatively and I am so grateful he has never given up on me or my dreams. I also cannot thank Joseph Salgado enough. Thank you for always having my back and truly supporting my passions. You have never doubted me and have always been there despite what path I choose next.

I also could not be more thankful to work with such amazing and passionate people. The entire Prospector and Minero staff have helped me become who I am today and I am so glad to have always been able to work with such great staff and supervisors. So much so, that this led to my promotion as photo editor for the magazine and it has been an incredible journey since. Vero, Crystal, Isa, and Amy thank you for creating such an amazing environment I call my second home and pushing us all to be the best versions of ourselves. I am overwhelmed by so much and have become a whole new person. I am overwhelmed by the support and experiences I have gained and could not feel more prepared to take on this new step in life. But being a senior, all you ever hear is, “Well, what do you plan on doing after graduation?” Despite my preparation, I have never been so unsure of what my answer is, but I know no matter what, I am going to figure it out and I have learned that sometimes it is okay to not know. The future has a mind of its own and I know that with my experiences throughout my college years I am ready for this new journey no matter the obstacles.

Jasmin Campoya is a staff photographer and cannot be reached at jncampoya@miners.utep.edu.

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THE PROSPECTOR - MAY 2, 2023

MAMA from page 2

amazing people. You continue to be a great mentor and someone I can rely on and trust. I will miss our long talks about life and I hope you miss them too; I also hope I do not disappoint you with any future love decision making.

Isa, my only daughter friend, thank you for all the conversations that we had, and for allowing me to find someone I can see myself in. I will always cherish the laughs that we shared and the tears I shed at your office table. You are one of the best people I have ever met, and I will always remember you. Thank you for being such an amazing supporter and coffee companion.

Amy, thank you so much for dealing with us, I know we can be quite a handful, but we appreciate everything you do for us. From standing in the cold handing out paper, to gossiping with us. Thank you for always greeting me with a smile whenever I come into the office, may the world always smile back at you.

Crystal, I know we had only a few months to know each other but I would like to thank you for taking the lead role we needed when we felt lost. I know the publication will continue to grow with you guiding us. Thank you for comforting me at my lowest and for all the help you have provided outside of work. I truly appreciate you.

I would like to thank my parents for their patience with me, I know I was not easy to deal with these past four or five years, yet you were always my number one supporters. Mamá y papá, espero lo que hago los lleve de orgullo y que algún día pueda pagarte todo lo que han hecho por mí. Nunca podré terminar de agradeceros por todo el amor que me dan y por brindarme la oportunidad de trabajar por mis sueños, espero algún día logremos todo lo que nos proponíamos juntos. Todo lo que soy es gracias a ustedes.

Now, finalizing this before publication for May 2, I cannot believe I am a few days away from walking the stage and receiving my degree. It is still a very surreal feeling that I wish I was more prepared for. The uncertainty of the future is scary, but I can at least rest assured my time at UTEP was something I enjoyed and loved.

I believe joining student media was the best decision I have ever made, and it was one that made UTEP better. I will be forever grateful to the people I met and for the opportunities provided by the department. I would also like to congratulate everyone graduating this semester; I am proud of all of you and wish you the best in life. I strongly encourage you to read the paper and the magazine, you guys have no idea how much love and dedication goes into the creation of each issue.

I am sure by reading student-led publications you will see the borderland and UTEP community differently and fall in love with it just like I did.

Maria L. Guerrero Duran was the web and copy editor for the magazine and photo editor for the magazine and cannot be reached at mlguerrerod@miners.utep.edu, nor @bymariaguerrero on Instagram.

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First-generation student, soon to be graduate

Myra Villarreal plans to continue her education at Baylor University in their master of athletic training program. Photo by Gianluca Cuevas/The Prospector

“I really didn’t know what I wanted to do first. I kind of wanted to do personal training because I liked working with people,” Villarreal said. “I started doing more research and (decided that) didn’t want to deal with the business aspect of it, so I tried looking for physical therapy (PT) or occupational therapy (OT). So, I had to look more toward PT, but I really wasn’t doing anything at UTSA to help me get my foot in the door. I guess the pandemic really kind of pushed me (back) because when I (was) in San Antonio, I didn’t feel like I was at home. So I just kind of felt like an outsider. So I had to come back home. It just felt right, and I’m so happy. I’ve done so much in El Paso over the years.”

Upon returning back home, Villarreal decided to study kinesiology at UTEP, with a concentration in human fitness performance. Being interested in working with people for years, Villarreal decided to pursue a career that would require working with others. Apart from her status as a people person, she also enjoys learning about human body, as it amazes her “how we can do certain things.”

After studying at UTEP, she was able to get an internship that would help her work up close with injured athletes in the rehabilitation process.

“It was there (that) I usually treat athletes and do rehab with them. If they came in with an injury like a post-operation, we could do rehab on them, and then we’d do treatment before practice,” Villarreal said.

Completing her education at UTEP and gaining experience with her internship, Villarreal feels ready to move on, especially as a first-generation graduate.

The stress of paying loans after graduating college

Walking across the stage with your diploma in hand and family congratulating you is a highlight in everyone’s life. For many, it does not go as planned. During their time in college, many students of UTEP do not receive enough grants or any money from financial aid, leading them to take out loans. With the stressful process of finding a job after graduation and being able to pay off this debt creates a heavy weight on UTEP students.

UTEP’s financial aid office assists incoming undergraduates and undergraduates with their financial aid. The graduate students are required to fill out the Federal Exit Counsel, create a personal budget, and choose a repayment plan. Through this, students are meant to follow through with this process.

“For 2022-2023, 34 percent of all undergraduates enrolled in either fall or spring and who applied for financial aid,” UTEP Financial Aid said. This rate may seem low to many; however, this is low because of how many students choose not to fill out the financial aid application because they do not receive financial assistance. The money piles on every time a student takes out a loan.

Freshman Alex Valles is majoring in nursing, is one of the many undergraduates who take out loans to pay towards their own higher education.

“Hopefully by the time I graduate, I’ll have a job within the major I’m currently studying in order to pay back the loans that I had to take out this semester as well as last,” Valles said. “I am kind of iffy though, if I’ll be able to pay it back, because it’s just a lot of money, and I don’t have to pay it yet, but it’s still a constant stressor that’s on my mind quite often.”

Students are expected to pay back their loans within 10 years but are given a six-month grace period to figure out how to receive or find the funds they need to pay back like looking for a job. If students do not meet these deadlines, they must call the loan service to protect their credit score.

“I know later on in the future I’m going to have to pay back a lot more than I’m used to,” Valles said. “I know I’m going to have to pay, and school being one of them is insanely stressful even now,” Valles said.

The recent graduates are not only bombarded with the pressure of finding a job but also having to scavenge for money to pay back the loans that burden them. Though the span of time provided, it gives students leeway, as the thousands of dollars taken out takes time to save up.

However, the span of time may not be enough for these students to pay back due to other priorities they have to tend to.

Depending on if the student finds a job and can save up that money, provide for their housing, food, and other human responsibilities, loans are just another burden added to these students.

Graduating is a main focus for UTEP seniors. They should be able to enjoy their time trying to find a career in their proper field and utilize their life rather than stressing over their large amounts of debt or risks of not being able to meet those payments.

For more information contact the UTEP financial aid office at studentfinancialaid@utep.edu or at (915) 747-5204.

Don Haskins event honors late basketball legend Willie Cager Jr.

On March 19, UTEP’s basketball legend William (“Willie”) Cager Jr. was honored at the Haskins Center, open and free to the El Paso community. The event honored Cager not only as the amazing basketball player that he was, but also as the amazing person, father, son, teammate, and friend that he was to so many people in his life. The event included his family, previous teammates, friends and admirers alike. Many shared heartfelt stories and Jaseon Cager had displayed in his storied life. Among the attendees was Kareem Cager, one of Cager’s sons.

“Our father, he was our superhero, you know he had been through a lot of adversity since he was born,” Kareem said. “And the things that we witnessed and watched him overcome through the years were a blessing to our family and just what he did toward the community.”

Kareem spoke on how important it was for his father to be positive and supportive throughout his life and off the court. Cager always carried a smile wherever he went, even toward the end of his life and where he was physically not able to help for him to show the value of strength to his community. Kareem spoke about the way his father approached a room, being able to engage so gracefully with others.

“I’m having five sisters, that see CAGER on page 7
Food scarcity: UTEP’s latest obstacle

BY VICTORIA CASTILLO
The Prospector

Student council members presented to the administrative guest a call to action regarding food security and housing, April 21. Which sparked a discussion of what more can be done to assist students toward their academic success. During this conversation food scarcity was the main topic of what can prevent a student from growing while working towards a higher education. Although food is a basic human necessity, some students have been faced with the harsh reality of seeing it as a luxury item. 46 percent of students stated they ate less despite feeling like they should not, and 38.2 percent of students skipped meals because of the lack of money for food in 2022, according to the Hunt Institute survey.

Lissette Gonzalez, a member of student council and attendee of the UTEP Food and Housing Security presentation, conducted a series of interviews with students regarding their budget for food weekly. Most students had a budget ranging from $25-$35 a week. One student Gonzalez had interviewed disclosed “Because my class is early; I will get a coffee at the food bank and skip straight to dinner. If I can make a big enough dinner, I do not have to eat breakfast.” Although the numbers are high for those who must see food as a luxury rather than a necessity, many students are unaware of the assistant programs UTEP has on campus. One program would be the Food Pantry, which is a reliable source for UTEP students to collect food or snacks for free. If there is a food pantry dedicated to feeding students who need assistance, why are the numbers so high? This could be because many students are unaware UTEP has a food pantry, the location is also not convenient and the stigmas regarding asking for help prevent them from doing so. Some students may feel shame or that they are taking from someone who is in more need than themselves. Such as Samantha Medina, a current junior at UTEP, who has not visited the food pantry due to this reason.

“I just wouldn’t want to take away from those who need it and benefit from it,” Medina said. Another way students could be more aware of the food pantry is through word-of-mouth marketing.

“I heard about the food pantry in my communication leadership class. One of our projects was researching non-profit organizations in El Paso, my professor suggested UTEP’s food pantry,” said Savannah Dixon, a UTEP senior. “I have been here four years, and I just found out about the pantry last semester.”

The word is being shared about the programs UTEP has for students in need, it is just a matter of getting the information further out to those who need it. Initiatives like changing the food pantries name to a more welcoming one or moving locations such as going to the union or outside the Undergraduate Learning Center (UCLC) building were brought up as well.

“I saw a box with snacks, mugs, and other things by cotton memorial that was labeled grab what you need! I felt more welcome to take what I needed. I feel like for the food pantry if it were labeled something like that I would likely stop by also if it were closer to campus” said Pablo Andre Bujorjes, a UTEP senior.

With the wave of graduating students and incoming freshmen incentives to make the food pantry more accessible, are being discussed. If you or you know someone who has found themselves in need of food check out the food pantry. The food pantry is located at UTEP Memorial Gym Room 105, 101 West Robinson Ave. Donations to the pantry are also welcomed. Students can also find affordable meal plans with Pick ‘N Shovel located at the Don Haskins.

The UTEP Food Pantry was established in 2014 and provides food security to staff and undergraduate/graduate students who are enrolled in the fall and spring semesters.

Photo by Joel Molina /The Prospector

THE UTEP STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES PROGRAM (SSSP)

Congratulations our 2023 Graduating Class

Jasmine Giselle Crain
Karina Patricia De La Paz
Edgar Del Rivero
Yaretsy Nahomy Hernandez
Armando A. Ramirez

Denisse Ramirez
Alec Tellez Berkowitz
Abraham Hernandez
Ana Sofia Bravo
Lydia Granados
By Itzel Giron

The saying “a man’s best friend” has been interpreted in many ways but possibly most noted by its meaning of a dog’s loyalty to their owner. For upcoming UTEP graduate Daniel ‘Dan’ Shiprack, the saying is more than just a loyal dog but rather two dogs who changed his life for the better.

Buddha and Daisy Mae are Shiprack’s service dogs, which are not only certified for PTSD but also detect seizures and diabetic concerns. Both with their own unique capabilities, Buddha helps keep Shiprack safe from PTSD triggers and Daisy Mae helps keep him safe from falling or having a bad day.

Although Daisy won’t be graduating this month, the duo has been in their shoes; being discriminated against.” Shiprack said. “It’s a social stereotype, ‘oh you have a disability’ and they don’t want to talk about it. Society in general doesn’t want to talk about disabilities.”

All three of them play a vital role in helping these clients emerge from their shell just like Shiprack needed at one point. “(Daisy) works really well with the kids, she has got five or six of the kids out of their shell,” Shiprack said. “She actually helped one of our full-spectrum autism clients and helped calm him down.”

While Daisy works with the youngest clients, Buddha is always ready to put the older ‘kid’s’ in their place according to Shiprack.

“We have two young adults clients that we’re working with right now that are in wheelchairs, I see when they’re in public working, how other people perceive them, they ignore them because they’re in a wheelchair,” Shiprack said. “There is one student who loves to work with the dogs, even though he is in a wheelchair and we have to be very careful, the dogs understand.”

Buddha meets him every morning at the bus, when the bus pulls into the parking lot.

Aside from their story alone, it is something that no one has ever had to go through before. As a result, Shiprack has been inspired to help others who are going through similar experiences. For Shiprack, it is more than just helping others, it is about connecting with them on a personal level.

Daisy and Buddha have attended UTEP together for the past five years and will be graduating later this month.

TOP RIGHT: Buddha, the first of Shiprack’s service dogs and who keeps him safe from PTSD triggers. He will be walking the stage along with Shiprack as his honorary graduate.

BOTTOM RIGHT: Daisy, second of Shiprack’s service dogs and who is responsible for his resocialization into society.

Photos by Joel Molina/The Prospector

The saying is “a man’s best friend” and it has meant a lot to Shiprack. Just like many it is not always easy to know how to handle the situation. For Shiprack, it is about connecting with others on a personal level. Shiprack’s service dogs, Buddha and Daisy Mae, come together and pose for a photo.

Upcoming UTEP graduate Daniel Shiprack and his service dogs, Buddha and Daisy Mae, come together and pose for a photo. Photo by Joel Molina/The Prospector

TOP RIGHT: Buddha, the first of Shiprack’s service dogs and who keeps him safe from PTSD triggers. He will be walking the stage along with Shiprack as his honorary graduate.

BOTTOM RIGHT: Daisy, second of Shiprack’s service dogs and who is responsible for his resocialization into society.

Photos by Joel Molina/The Prospector
was his attitude and his mannerism,” Karrim said. “It wasn’t about bringing anyone down, and I think because of that smile he brought to everybody, people gravitated to him and wanted to be around him, his presence alone meant the world to everybody.”

Tyler C. Ragin is a 2020 UTEP Alumni who studied corporate communication with a minor in Creative Writing and was a UTEP track runner. She speaks of Cager’s influence on student athletes like herself. Ragin speaks in the film “Glory Road” and the realization about how that person’s life was affected. “Willie Cager to me was a trendsetter who literally paved the way for many people like me black student athletes, to come to UTEP and two, play in college sports at all,” Ragin said. “It’s alarming to me to think how his life must have evolved over the years, but he was always so supportive of UTEP athletes, every single game, meet, match that he could go to, you’d see Willie rolling in.” Ragin speaks on how even as a track runner, Cager recognized her in a Wal-Mart parking lot saying, “Hey I know you, you’re that little fast track girl!” Showing up to UTEP sports events was extremely important to Cager as not only a former player, but fellow miner. “The phrase ‘once a miner; always a miner’ holds true for Mr. Willie Cager,” Ragin said. “I really hope the city of El Paso can learn to be just as supportive in the same way as he was.”

This event hosted by UTEP showed how far kindness and support can go to a community, just like how Cager was to his community.

Unfortunately, news has struck the team, as the ever-growing expansion of the United Mexican border of entry can cause potential demolition of the ice rink and Coliseum.

“We will not be collateral damage,” said Tyler Deloach, vice president of the El Paso Rhinos. “I’m not against the expansion, but we can’t lose everything we have built.” Deloach has been with the Rhinos since 2013. Graduating from Georgetown, she immediately started as an office worker for the team, working her way to vice president. However, hockey has

The Office of Student Fellowships and Awards supports UTEP students who are applying for nationally competitive scholarships and fellowships to fund graduate school and overseas experiential learning (research, teaching assistantships, etc.).

What is an external fellowship?
• National competitive funding opportunities are available that:
  • Based on academic merit as opposed to financial need
  • Open to students from a variety of majors
  • Eligibility, application materials, and deadlines vary depending on the award
  • Involve a substantial amount of time commitment and careful planning

What do these awards provide?
• Funding for graduate school either domestically or abroad

Why should I apply?
• Potential for advancement in one’s career
• Experiential learning (research, teaching assistantships, etc., both during undergrad and beyond

Is my first or second year too early to start thinking about these opportunities?
Absolutely not! Most applications are due junior or senior year, but joining our Undergraduate Fellows Program as a first-year student or sophomore will help you prepare.

Stay connected! Log in to view upcoming information sessions.
Regardless of the city’s intentions, any form of upgrade to current infrastructure will inevitably affect all existing residents. However, in this case the demolition of the rink and Coliseum could spell disaster for the El Paso Hockey Association. Emecot was demolished in 2020, estimated in around a million dollars, “Deloach said. “At the time, no compensations have been discussed, but if it comes to it, the Rhinos will live on, one way or another.”

Deloach said.

Perhaps the city’s intentions, any form of upgrade to current infrastructure will inevitably affect all existing residents. However, in this case the demolition of the rink and Coliseum could spell disaster for the El Paso Hockey Association. According to FreightWaves, “More than 650,000 cargo trucks crossed the border using the Ysleta Zaragoza International Bridge in 2022, while 161,439 trucks used the Bridge of the Americas.”

This number also causes numerous blocks for civilian cars and long waiting hours for residents of both countries. Whatever the city decides, it will have a fundamental impact in the city’s future.

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This number also causes numerous blocks for civilian cars and long waiting hours for residents of both countries. Whatever the city decides, it will have a fundamental impact in the city’s future.
“Being a Top Ten Senior is a huge honor,” said Ian Valdez. “I have enjoyed meeting the other students and the mutual respect we have for one another has been rewarding.” The application process was simple for some of them since they were applied for different awards in the past. However, others found it challenging and overwhelming. That was the case for Sarah Micke- lson, Truman scholarship recipient. “The process was somewhat stress- ful because I was also finishing up my Truman application at the same time,” said Mickeelson. “I almost did not submit because I was not sure if I was going to get my letters of recommendation on time. But, it allowed me to reflect on my time here at UTEP and on all of the great things I’ve been able to do here.”

Mickeelson is the university’s first Truman scholar since 2006. This award opened many doors for her success. It gave her internship and mentorship opportunities, along with funding for future studies like law school. UTEP offered her support and advice during the long process.

“I approached a lot of people for help,” said Mickeelson. “I really mean a lot to me,” said Christian Campos. “So’s great reflection of my journey here at UTEP.”

UTEP’S NEWEST TOP 10 SENIORS

“Serve as a leader for younger generations,” said Ashley Delgado. “I know that I’m going to be attending Baylor College of Medicine this summer,” said Campos. “I’ll be studying at their position assistant program.” Filled with gratefulness and joy, many of them want to give back to UTEP. They want to repay to their community in any way possible so future students will have even more opportunities and encourage future generations.

“My biggest goal is to give back to UTEP a lot of what has given me and others,” said Castaneda. “I really have a passion of helping Hispanic- ics in STEM, so I want to establish many opportunities you see in their potential to pursue a higher education.”

“Tese students got the chance to experience incredible opportuni- ties like internships and differ- ent awards. Mickeelson see these experiences as not only personal and professional growth, but as an incentive to help and serve the university.”

“UTEP has offered me all the resources to be and compete at the same level as other students from more renowned universities such as Stanford, Harvard,” said Carlos Castaneda. “I have participated in opportunities where I have com- peted and worked alongside those kinds of students, and I truly see the value of this university.”

From when they first started college until now, all of them have reached achievements they thought were impossible. From creating a big impact in UTEP and El Paso community, to representing the university around the world.

“I recently returned from the OFSA helped me a lot, as well as my mentors from the Political Science Department and the El Paso Public Defender’s office. My friends and family were very sup- portive as well.”

“Serving as a leader for younger generations,” said Ashley Delgado. “I feel extremely happy to have someone who helped UTEP to be home and part of his teach and enjoys engaging with students and building personal connections, being a professor was not something that Maldonado wanted to do so it was on his mind growing up.”

“What I wanted to do was be on the radio, I had this voice since eighth grade, and I remember that I loved music and listening to the radio, and I was like you know what I can definitely do this as a career,” Maldonado said. “I worked at KTEP and Kiss-FM for about six years and I thought that is what I wanted to do with my life but I got older experiences changes, espe- cially when I went to grad school.”

Entering as a nervous freshman in 2010, a professor whose roots and identity are tied to a university that has stood by his side all these years, Professor Jose D. Maldonado, a UTEP graduate, owes his success to the university.

Graduating in 2015 with a com- munication studies degree, Maldo- nado stayed at UTEP to pursue his master’s degree in 2017 and consid- ers those years influential.

“It was more than I expected because I had great professors, I had a lot of professors in the communications department as well that were super impactful and now, they’re my colleagues,” said Castaneda. “I plan on working at a congress- man’s office,” said Valdez. “Either here or in Washington, D.C. for a few years before attending law school.”

“I plan in fnishing my master’s degree,” said Mickelson. “I have participated in internship programs, found a job or get their master’s degree. "I plan on working at a congress- man’s office,” said Valdez. “Either here or in Washington, D.C. for a few years before attending law school.”

“I plan on fnishing my master’s here at UTEP,” said Mickelson. “Then applying for a Fulbright or Marshall scholarship. I also have the chance to do a year in D.C. at an internship of my choice.”

“My biggest goal in life is to use my education as a power tool to impact the borderland community,” said Delgado. “Continue encourag- ing and mentoring younger generations of students to believe in their potential to pursue a higher education.”

These Miners are prepared for what the future will bring to the table. They are the example of what UTEP does for students both aca- demically and professionally, and even personally. The future looks bright for this next generation.

Angelica Gutierrez is a contributor and may be reached at agutierrez89@miners.utep.edu.
feel for teaching. This experience helped Maldonado teach his own courses during his second year of graduate school.

Passionate about teaching, Maldonado’s endeavors at UTEP did not end as soon as he landed a job in 2017 as an adjunct professor teaching public speaking. Stepping into classrooms where he once sat and interacting with colleagues who were once former professors was quite an adjustment for Maldonado.

“When I was first here it was weird because I was like ‘I am here, what do I do? Am I doing this correctly, are they judging me because I was just a student and do I deserve to be here, do they think I’m not qualified enough to be here?’” Maldonado said. “After my third year I was more cemented like yeah, I do belong here and I’m glad that I am here, and I continue to work to make sure that I bring value to this department.”

Inspired by his students, Maldonado started his Ph.D. education program at UTEP. Despite being raised by a single mom and growing up in a household surrounded by women, he will always be grateful for what UTEP has given back to him as it has changed his life.

“I’m very proud to be from UTEP, we are very prestigious at least when it comes to research, and UTEP has produced a lot of graduates, but it has changed my life and that’s why I make it a part of my identity because I wasn’t the best kid growing up,” Maldonado said. “When I got to UTEP it really changed me because this was the life that I want and if it wasn’t for UTEP I don’t know what I’ll be doing so I’m really grateful.”

Erik Acosta is a staff reporter and may be reached at emacosta6@miners.utep.edu

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"Do not go where the path may lead, go instead where there is no path and leave a trail."

-Ralph Waldo Emerson

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Nicole Marie Makrakis
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Mary Elizabeth Lewis
Gladys Lerma
Mary Elizabeth Lewis
Celene Lopez
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Thank you for helping us to build our future together!

We can't wait to see your next steps, and we want you to stay connected to us!

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YOU WORKED HARD TO GET HERE, NOW WE CELEBRATE YOUR SUCCESS AND PROMISE A FUTURE.

LO HINERS
PRESIDENT HEATHER WILSON
You're not stuck—
you're learning, you're growing,
you're preparing to "bloom."

After years of hard work! Finally, DOM!

Gracias a Dios y a mi familia
por lograr mi sueño.

- Adriana

This is the beginning of a new
era...! Cardona

Hello...!

Thank you UTEP
for helping me
make my
happy and

its knowledge.

- Claudia

Thank you to my
family for supporting...

- Brittan

Congratulations!

- Good Luck Class of 2023

Congrats! We did it!!!

- Alex

Congsat!

- Pediatric

We made it Class of 2023

Congrats! Andrea

Thank you to all
my family & friends.

- Angela

Congratulations
Class of 2023

- Lina

Undergraduate
studies done!

- Jennifer

So blessed to finish
at a young age.

- Emely

Thank you UTEP
for helping me
into the person
I am! I have gained
so much and I am
so much more.

- Lilibelle

I never stop pushing
myself.

- Angel

I did it for
Her! Love you
family/familia.

- Elna

- Make friends!
you'll need them
when you leave!

- Ethan

- We did it!
- Ryon

Congratulations

- Go Miners!!

I dedicate this to my family.

- Jennifer Rodriguez

Alicia Hernandez

Koreen Garcia

Antonia

Jenni

Mimi}

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS
Congratulations
of 2023

The University of Texas at El Paso
Dear Graduates,

With pride, we celebrate your future ahead. Congratulations, Class of 2023.

As you embark on this new chapter, may your academic achievements and personal growth continue to flourish. May this university be a stepping stone towards your dreams and aspirations.

Go Miners!

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Congratulations on your impressive achievement! We are excited for the great opportunities that are waiting for you and wish you the very best!

Go Miners!

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Go Miners!
‘Gathering for Water’: Bringing life to the community

BY ERIK ACOSTA
The Prospector

UTEP held a two-week dance festival celebrating earth’s most fundamental element, leaving its audience captivated by the beauty of the performances and message. Gathering for Water, a dance festival put together by Rio Bosque Wetlands Park, Friends of the Rio Bosque and the Fine Arts Department at UTEP, is a body of work that highlights the importance of water and the impact it has on our planet’s health and survival.

The festival offered various events for people to see such as pop-up water dances, an art exhibition and more. The festival continued to honor this resource at a dance show called “Our secrets as we shed them: Experiencing the Bosque reimagined.” A walk-through experience moves its audience through a magical surrealist world inspired by Rio Bosque Wetlands Park, divided into four sections containing separate stories, leaving viewers mesmerized by the dancers.

Building headpieces and ushering for the show, UTEP student Lee Nixon was in awe of the show’s narration and the dancers. “I loved the bird section and getting to build those headpieces and then seeing how magical the dancers looked in the space was really gratifying,” Nixon said. “I was in awe for most of the narration and the serene music really brings you into the space of all the creatures and plants in the Bosque only to have that disrupted by the trash and pollution people have brought, it’s almost distressing how it hits you.”

Each section of the Bosque is explored, starting with grasslands, oceans and wetlands and finishing in the freezing Arctic. Audience members get to explore the relationship between animals and plants as they navigate through trash in each section.

As the show ends, viewers meet the ghost of the Bosque played by Simmone Velazquez, a section of the show that symbolizes how trash and pollution impact Bosques, destroying animals and planets. Having two roles for the water dance festival, Velazquez felt playing the ghost of Bosque was the easiest to connect with. “Playing the first role was really personal to me because I love nature, so it was very easy for me to connect into the role I was trying to portray, I believe in all of these energies, so it was easy to embody this ghost of the Bosque,” Velazquez said. “The meaning of our show is really important cause it’s about nature and how trash can destroy the environment and the animals are impacted by that.”

As the show ends, viewers meet the ghost of the Bosque played by Simmone Velazquez, a section of the show that symbolizes how trash and pollution impact Bosques, destroying animals and planets. Having two roles for the water dance festival, Velazquez felt playing the ghost of the Bosque was the easiest to connect with. “Playing the first role was really personal to me because I love nature, so it was very easy for me to connect into the role I was trying to portray, I believe in all of these energies, so it was easy to embody this ghost of the Bosque,” Velazquez said. “The second role was a little bit hard because I am portraying a Victorian dancer who is very abstract and is powerful, so it was difficult for me to portray that.”

It is important to remember how vital it is to protect our water so that it remains healthy. According to an article from The Texas Tribune earlier this month, Texas has the fifth highest rate of lead in water pipes, which can cause for all sorts of negative health and environment effects. So, while this festival celebrates this element, it can also be a wake-up call to protect our water systems and environment, so future generations can celebrate it like we do today.

KEEP OUR WATER CLEAN!

Only rain should go down the storm drain.

Storm drains are easily identified with “NO DUMPING” decals at stormwater inlets.

Erik Acosta is a staff reporter and may be reached at eracosta6@miners.utep.edu
The borderland’s wrestling roots branch out

By Avery Escamilla

Mystery art covers the glass gallery showcasing the talents of UT El Paso students. The senior lecture, holding its annual end-of-semester gallery, "Clue Killer Portfolio Exhibits," to showcase the students’ designs this semester. The audience will solve the murder mystery through the student’s designs.

Distinguished Professor Clive Cochran lectures Graphic Design 9, a senior portfolio class.

"The idea of an end-of-semester exhibition was pitched by Professor Jean Julio in 2009. "It's been fun, but it's been a lot of work," Cochran said. "Especially because I wanted it to be something that made it worse. Having to cross the border was difficult."

Persephone found the perfect way to combine sports with her higher education and passion for sports medicine, by finding a degree that would allow her to be familiar with injuries from first-hand experience and put her knowledge to use in the ring and in other sports as well.

"I love that my major and wrestling connect so well, because I worked in a physical therapy clinic, I worked in different athletic training rooms," Persephone said.

"So, literally my job as a student and I guess my ‘normal’ career was taking care of athletes. It translates perfectly cause when I get hurt, my husband gets hurt or even when I was in Juárez, other wrestlers would get hurt and I already knew what to do."

Being a student at UT El Paso is different than any other college experience because it is a commuter school. The unique location of the university invites students from all over the city and across the border to go on really long drives to get an education. Persephone is no exception.

"On top of being a border commuter, she had to navigate two lives and busy schedules. "It was really hard," Persephone said. "Especially because I wanted to finish a little quickly, so I started taking from 15 to 18 or 19 hours a semester. I was trying to train, go to the gym, and hang out with my friends, that made it worse."

"I loved it, the crowd is just so loving," Persephone said. "Especially because I wanted to combine sports with my higher education and passion for sports medicine, you know, I just like being on that same love when I go back home."

Despite her years in college being extremely demanding, la ruda nylon, her time in El Paso and the borderland’s influence on lucha libre.

"I’m a little more known to shows with them, see their parents, the support from the frena, no matter where you go."

Persephone will come to El Paso, for the show "Col- lateral Damage," on May 12, at the Delgado Legacy Borderplex.

Editor's note: This is the second part of a three-part series. At the heart of the ring, a young El Pasoan luchadora has grown to be a known name and has become a well-known figure in the wrestling world. La ruda, Persephone, formerly known as Black Widow, is a 22-year-old UT El Paso student who has been wrestling for eight years and has recently signed with Lucha Libre AAA Worldwide, Mexico’s top wrestling league.

Persephone, whose real name remains anonymous, graduated from UT El Paso in May 2022, with a bachelor’s degree in kinesiology with a concentration in clinical exercise. In lucha libre, wrestlers fall into two categories, rudos or técnicos. Rudos are those who have a tyrannical role, they are the “mean” guys of the ring. Being a técnico means that you go by the rules and are loyal to your team. Persephone, with her original character Black Widow, started lucha libre in the rudos team in her early teens. Despite her being the only luchadora in her family, her love for sports, especially for lucha libre, was impressed on her at a very young age, making her interested in becoming a professional luchadora.

"I started because I really liked it since I was little," Persephone said. "My whole family is into it so they would take me to lucha shows in El Paso and Ciudad Juárez. My dad put me into a lot of sports growing up, so I thought it was just another sport to try. I really liked it, I stuck with it, I started like maybe eight years ago, training, and I’m still here."

With the support of her parents, Persephone was able to make a name for herself, while still growing up like a normal teenager. Like any regular teenager, the attention her parents were giving her seemed overwhelming, but now looking back, she appreciates all the efforts made by them and cherishes the memories they made together.

"I started really young, I debuted in front of a crowd at 15, when I started traveling, I was maybe 17, so my parents were a little protective and worried," Persephone said. "One of my favorite memories is how much they would travel with me, it was always fun going to shows with them, seeing them out there, hanging out with them. Currently, now that I’m here in Mexico, and I travel so much more on a professional level they obviously don’t really travel with me anymore, they’re at home."

As a student, Persephone had the freedom to combine sports with her higher education and passion for sports medicine, by finding a degree that would allow her to be familiar with injuries from first-hand experience and put her knowledge to use in the ring and in other sports as well.

"I love that my major and wrestling connect so well, because I worked in a physical therapy clinic, I worked in different athletic training rooms," Persephone said.

"So, literally my job as a student and I guess my ‘normal’ career was taking care of athletes. It translates perfectly cause when I get hurt, my husband gets hurt or even when I was in Juárez, other wrestlers would get hurt and I already knew what to do."

"Being a student at UT El Paso is different than any other college experience because it is a commuter school. The unique location of the university invites students from all over the city and across the border to go on really long drives to get an education. Persephone is no exception. On top of being a border commuter, she had to navigate two lives and busy schedules. "It was really hard," Persephone said. "Especially because I wanted to finish a little quickly, so I started taking from 15 to 18 or 19 hours a semester. I was trying to train, go to the gym, and hang out with my friends, that made it worse."

The exhibitions run by the students in the graphic design class. Each student is responsible for working with one another and coming up with a theme, what are they going to showcase, how the gallery will look, catering and even the dates the show will open, including exhibition day.

"It’s a complete mystery to me what they’re going to do because again, the students are responsible for doing this," Cochran said. "Now, very often they throw ideas by me, they ask for a certain amount of help in putting everything together and I can provide advice, but they decide how the show is going to be hung."

Senior Jos Rivera, a double major in graphic design and metals, is one of the many students taking Cochran’s class.

"We’ve had a pretty easy time, mostly because a lot of us have very similar mindsets and can kind of bounce ideas off each other pretty quickly," Rivera said.

The student-run show takes many hours of their day to prepare for the exhibit. Many of the students are going to showcase their packaging, posters and other elements related to the popular board game Clue.

"It’s been pretty stressful, but it’s been a long time coming with all the work that we’ve been doing throughout our career and learning graphic design, it’s family coming to like an end," Robles said.

The journey has not ended just yet as these students will be meeting May 30 to set up the whole exhibit. The Clue Killer Portfolio Exhibit reception will officially be held from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. through May 12 in the Glass Gallery. At 6:30 p.m., May 8, students will host the reception where attendees will be given a Clue game sheet where they will be able to solve the murder mystery with the clues provided by the students’ artwork. Many of these guests are artists who want to network with the students and offer multiple different job opportunities.

Make sure to join in on the fun and solve the murder mystery. For more information on the exhibit, visit the Instagram (grupet_duoart).
In the late 1940s, if a UTEP student needed to blow off some steam, chances are they would be told to head straight toward the Union Ballroom. The goal was to create a special space of vibrance to encompass a fun social spirit to benefit both students and faculty of the university. Soon, the ballroom was converted into the UTEP Dinner Theatre, where it serves as a rich theatre program to students to this day. This helped the Theatre Program blossom into a useful tool for aspiring performers in front and behind the stage.

Carolina Caldera, a soon-to-be UTEP graduate studying theatre, is someone who knows this well, as she has worked both on and behind the stage. As a young fan of musicals, Caldera knew this was the field for her.

“I have always been a fan of musicals since I was six years old (specifically ‘The Phantom of the Opera: the 25th Anniversary edition’), but when I was in high school, I decided to pursue theatre,” Caldera said.

Caldera soon did her first high school play, finding joy in how theatre made life more interesting in her eyes, everyday being different during a new run of a show. Although Caldera had acting ambitions, she started out behind the scenes at The Wise Family Theatre, working on sets.

“Even though I was not performing at the time, this experience helped me as an actor,” Caldera said. “I realized how much work goes into creating the space for an actor, how that ties up with the story that the actor creates with (their) character.”

Caldera went on countless auditions, never giving up on her dream and after much hard work, she has done three shows at the Dinner Theatre, including “The Full Monty.” Caldera expects to continue the arts in El Paso to gain more experience and encourages aspiring theatre students to get experience now while you can.

Some students who have thrived in the theatre space have done so by accident, later connecting to the community. This is the case for one upcoming UTEP theatre graduate and San Antonio native Elias Perales.

It was eighth grade when Perales accidentally stumbled into his school’s theatre class instead of his scheduled one, resulting in a great mistake. After that day, Perales continued theatre, throughout high school, excelling in the advanced theatre classes. Perales credits his late high school theatre teacher Jennifer Frederick as the jumping point to pursue theatre in college.

“She was an amazing teacher, she really brought me up and made me more confident in myself,” Perales said. “She passed my sophomore year of high school, and that was when I thought I wanted to pursue theatre. She made me realize how collaborative, caring, and open it is to be a part of theatre, everybody working together to create something for audiences to watch and think about was one of the main reasons I decided to pursue theatre in college.”

Soon Elias came to UTEP from San Antonio, finding an appreciation in UTEP’s Theatre Program and later becoming a key figure in it. One of Perales’ favorite memories was working on the show “Borderline - A Southwest Premier Ghost Story” by Andrew Sianez-De La O.

“Our director Kim had been talking to him for about two years and stayed in contact with him,” Perales said. “When we ended up doing it, we got to really improvise, be collaborative with the script instead of just normally doing what the script is telling you, expanding on what was already there.”

Perales hopes to pursue graduate school and encourages aspiring performers to not limit themselves.

Matthew Nunez is a theatre student at UTEP graduate studying theatre, someone who knows this well, as he has worked both on and behind the stage. As a young fan of musicals since I was six years old (specifically ‘The Phantom of the Opera: the 25th Anniversary edition’), but when I was in high school, I decided to pursue theatre, “(their) character.” It was eighth grade when Perales...

Jasmin Campus
Digital Media Production
Photographer, The Prospector
Photo Editor, Minero Magazine

Maria L. Guerrero Darin
English and American Literature
Web/Graphic Editor, The Prospector
Editor-in-Chief, Minero Magazine

Brandy Vanessa Roiz
Multimedia Journalism
Former Editor-in-Chief, Minero Magazine

Student Media and Publications congratulates their Spring 2023 Graduates!

Thank you for the extraordinary work you have done at The Prospector and Minero Magazine. We are proud of you and can’t wait to see all the great things you will continue to accomplish!

Ethan Thomas
Multimedia Journalism
Writer/Photographer, Minero Magazine

Katrina Villarreal
Multimedia Journalism
Sports Reporter, Minero Magazine
Multimedia Editor, The Prospector
The Full Monty brings a full house

By Erik Roseta

The Prospector

With the semester winding down, the UTEP Dinner Theatre decided to end its 40th anniversary with a bang, performing “The Full Monty.” With a packed opening night, the award-winning musical opened April 21, filling the air with laughter and cheers.

Based on the Academy Award-nominated film, the musical offers its audience a journey exploring friendship and self-respect with its famous score and dance sequences to ensure a grand old time.

The story takes place in the late 1990s in Buffalo, New York and centers around a group of friends, one of them, Jerry (John Levick), is looking for money so he can pay for child support to see his son. He soon comes up with an idea to start a strip tease act with the help of his buddy Dave (Zaidd Ricarte).

Soon Jerry and Dave find four other men as well as his former boss to join his group, Malcolm (Angel Rodriguez), Home (Allen Thompson), Ethan (Ulices Cordova) and Harold (Freditte Nevarez).

Together these men dance and strip their way into the audiences’ hearts, leaving them wanting more.

With the show’s closing number around the corner, the strip tease act took center stage to perform their number, entertaining the audience with laughs and ending the show on a high note.

An El Paso native, Anna Rodarte, went to see the show with her mom and considers the show to be worthwhile.

“I thought it was such a great show; it was really well produced, and it looked very well rehearsed,” Rodarte said. “My favorite part of the show was all the musicals, I am a big fan of musicals, so it was great to be in the audience. It would be funny as the first time.”

Other characters to mention are Georgie (Chole Curtis), Pam (Elise M. Hendon), Vicki (Keri Baggs), Jeanette (Carol Viescas) and Nathan (Kal Spencer) who all had standout performances throughout the show.

As the last few performances start to wind down, one special star, Zaidd Ricarte, who plays Dave, enjoys every moment on stage as he will be graduating soon and will leave a place he considers home.

Joining the UTEP Dinner Theatre in 2017 during its 35th anniversary, Ricarte always wanted to perform. Since then, his dreams have come full circle as he performed in every show that the Dinner Theatre has put on.

“I always loved performing ever since I was little; I have a memory of having a little karaoke machine that I used to use a lot,” Ricarte said. “When I found out about the auditions in 2017 for the Addams family here at the Dinner Theatre, I was like ‘I have to do this’ and ever since then I been lucky enough to do almost every show.”

Ricarte feels the happiest when he is on stage and recalls the excitement of seeing an audience smile or laugh throughout his performances as one of the most rewarding moments for him.

“This show really gave me an excitement and a security in myself that I don’t think I have ever found before, and I think performing just makes me really happy and excited,” Ricarte said. “And sometimes when I look out in the audience during the finale or hors, it really makes my heart happy and warm to see people really enjoying the show.”

With this show being his graduating performance as a UTEP student, Ricarte still has plans to continue acting in hopes of doing it professionally, as he considers this dinner theatre experience the most rewarding thing he has done.

“I am excited mostly for the future and what’s to come, I have also become very emotional ever since we started this rehearsal process and doing things for the last time as a student, and I owe a lot of myself and training to the UTEP Dinner Theatre,” Ricarte said. “This show, role and anniversary has been a very full circle moment for me, it has been rewarding and I’m excited to come back so I can give back to this place that has taught me so much.”

As closing night approaches, Ricarte will always cherish his experience and the friendships he has made here. He considers Gregory Taylor, Beverly Kerbs-Ward, and Jaime Barbas as professors who have impacted him and his learning.

“I owe a lot to myself and who I am to this place, to my teachers and I think a lot of my college identity and experience was fermented here, I created so many friendships here,” Ricarte said. “So, on closing night, I think I’m going to feel sad just because it has been a big part of my life over these past years, but I am excited on what’s to come.”

The Full Monty still has a couple of shows remaining, so take a friend or a family member and do not miss out on this musical which will close May 7. For more information about tickets and hours, visit the UTEP Dinner Theatre website.

“The Full Monty” is showing at the UTEP Dinner Theatre from April 21 to May 7. Photo by Salma Paola Baca/The Prospector

Building a life around a passion for photos

By Elidia Nunez

The Prospector

Graduation season has arrived, which means many students are preparing to show off their brand-new caps and gowns to the world. Like any important occasion, graduation is one that requires kept memories. That said, photographers are being booked by the dozens, including some of UTEP’s student photographers.

While they finish up their exams and team projects, they are also booked to capture the journey of future graduates.

Not all photographers at UTEP are studying photography. From computer science to theatre majors, anyone who has an eye for the perfect picture can have a passion for photography.

“I’ve gotten more bookings. Since we have a lot of actors graduating from the Department of Theater and Dance, we have a lot of headshots for grad schools that need to be taken,” said Fern Trousdale, a theatre education junior at UTEP. “When it came to photography, I found a lot of joy in taking pictures of other people because sometimes you can’t always remember the memories that may have happened. Since I do theater, one of their biggest things is capturing what’s on stage.”

While the photographers are the professionals behind the camera, they are also the students learning from their professors. Being a student, especially full-time, can mean more work from school and business. Despite the amount of work these students are put through, many find ways to follow up with their clients, and plan on doing more projects in the future.

“I have done one graduation shoot and I’m trying to get more. I do have another graduation shoot, but it’s for a high school,” said Christian Solis, a student creative assistant (for) UTEP Athletics. “I think if I post more, I’ll start getting more work. I know what it takes to do those shoots, so if I did have more, I’m pretty sure I would be more filled up with my schedule.”

While independent student photographers have total control over their business, small student photography businesses? While academic...
Senior spotlight: Isabel Brooks

Brooks was inspired by her parents because they introduced her to the sport. "You’re just trying to do the same thing over and over again and replicate the same picture, the same weight distribution in your model," Brooks said. "They’re always who I go to when something is happening or going on that I need help with."

Brooks earned Conference USA’s (C-USA) Commissioner’s Academic honor roll for 2020, 2021 and 2022. During her junior year, Brooks led the team seven times in smallbore and six times in air rifle and registered the highest aggregate score in seven matches. Brooks shot a personal best 587 in air rifle at the National Collegiate Athletic Association qualifier in Alaska. That same year, Brooks posted a career-high 1167 aggregate twice.

Brooks was a part of the UTEP Rifle Team since her freshman year. She has been doing rifle for almost seven years now. Brooks says she was able to visit UTEP on an unofficial visit for rifle where, at the same time, she was able to see the mechanical engineering department and all it had to offer. "(I) was super happy with the program and very excited about the chance to get to shoot in college and be a student athlete," Brooks said.

For Brooks doing rifle was love at first sight. There is no other sport she sees herself playing. Brooks says her favorite thing about rifle is that it is repetitive and relaxing allowing one to let go and go with the flow, while still applying some control. When it comes to rifle, Brooks is inspired by her parents because they introduced her to the sport. "You’re just trying to do the same thing over and over again and replicate the same picture, the same weight distribution in your model," Brooks said. "They’re always who I go to when something is happening or going on that I need help with."

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Being a part of the UTEP rifle team has meant a lot to Brooks. She says that it was what brought her to El Paso, and it has been her home away from home while in school. Balancing school and college athletics is difficult at times, Brooks says it is okay if everything is not perfectly balanced. "The team" gave me a support system 800 miles away from home and it’s helped me come into my own a little bit and find my own groove and my friends and my family," Brooks said. "It takes a lot of falling on your face to figure out what works for you, because what works for me isn’t gonna work for the next person. You have to decide how organized you need things to be to get things to work and how rigid your schedule needs to be. It mostly just comes down to deciding what you want to get out of things, to balance everything."

COVID-19 was a tough challenge, Brooks says her most memorable moment with the rifle team was the first matches of the year where they were able to have fans at the range to cheer them on after the pandemic. Being able to have her family and friends cheer them on was a great experience. Those are days when life gets hard. Brooks says that on the days where she feels unmotivated, she takes the time to rest and make a list of everything she needs to get done right then and there. "Everything else besides that just gets put aside to a later date and I just try to rest and be nice to myself because you can’t always operate at 100 percent all the time," Brooks said.

Once Brooks graduates from UTEP with her master’s degree, she wants to give back and help support her community. "I’m looking at going into power production, works at the Chihuahuas stadium."

"I’m looking at going into power generation and I feel like, that’s a really good way to help provide for the community and all of those around me and try to help in little ways," Brooks said.

Brooks ended the interview with a message to her teammates. "Thank you for all of your help, support and love, it has definitely made it a very memorable 4 years and I’m looking forward to another year with some new faces," Brooks said.

Brooks was a part of the Conference USA Commissioner’s Academic Medalist and Honor Rifle since 2020. Photo by Joel Molina/The Prospector

Chihuahuas’ mixed start to season

BY H. CATCHING MARGINOT
The Prospector

This spring has brought back the offerings fans love from jumbo hot dogs to colorful in-game fireworks, offerings fans love from jumbo hot dogs to colorful in-game fireworks, and if you are a fan in the El Paso community, then you are more familiar with the El Paso Chihuahuas baseball team.

The team has played 25 games in April, five of which were against the Salt Lake Bees. So far, the Chihuahuas have won seven games and lost 14, with an average of eight games behind. Among the teams listed in the league, the Chihuahuas have the lowest winning percentage rate of .333 percent.

Raniz Galavis, a first-year student studying digital media production, works at the Chihuahuas stadium. "We’ve had two home games so far, the next one is next Tuesday, and I think the season is going well," Galavis said. "Some losses here and there but few to worry about, we had Tatis Jr. also known as ‘El Nino,’ a player who plays for the Padres in the MLB (Major League Baseball)."

Tatis, nicknamed ‘El Nino,’ has been a star player for the Chihuahuas, hitting seven home runs and 17 hits in total for his eight games played. Tatis was relegated to the Chihuahuas after an injury that took place in his time with the MLB’s San Diego Padres. Luis Liberio has appeared in the most games this season at 21 games. Liberio has had nine runs, 17 hits at bat, and one home run. The team’s best performance was their win over Friday night against the Sugar Land Space Cowboys on March 31. With a score of 4-3 in the end, the team was 5-1 in the bottom of the sixth inning, soon coming back with 3 runs, lead-off hitter Matten Barten touched base four times to secure the win for the Chihuahuas.

Iziah Salas, a mechanical engineering student at UTEP, describes himself as a lifelong Chihuahua fan. "I loved the promotions when Tatis was there, it is amazing to have MLB superstars here in front of us in El Paso."

With a popular 2022 season El Paso Chihuahuas fans are still excited to see how this current season plays out. Having started out with a bang but going up and down with wins and losses since then, fans still are curious where the season may end up. Fans’ support for the sport and the team may lead the team into the positive direction.

H. Catching Marginot is a contributor and may be reached at hcmarginot@miners.utep.edu.
What about the women's 2022 basketball season?

**BY NICHOLAS MAES**

The 2022-23 women's basketball season proved to be an eventful one as the Miners beat a ranked opponent for the first time in 25 years and only the second time in program history. The women began their season with a five-game winning streak, only getting stumped by Sacramento State (14-18, Big Sky 7-11) just two weeks into the season. The Miners also took on New Mexico State (18-17, WAC 10-8) twice on Nov. 30 and Dec. 13, 2022 two weeks apart and came out on top for both games. In between the two games, the team did take a loss to the Air Force Academy in a difficult four-point loss in their final game of the regular season. The C-USA Tournament provided a strong start for the Miners, with a ten-point win against LA Tech, but ended with a heart wrenching six-point loss against Middle Tennessee. The National Invitation Tournament stint was cut short when the Miners took a 13-point loss against the Texas Tech Raiders (20-15, C-USA 6-12). The women proved to be a strong team during the 2022-23 season. With a 12-8 standing in C-USA, the Miners gained more than they lost. The win against 21-ranked Middle Tennessee was huge not only for the program but for the players as well.

"I felt like we had a pretty good group of girls this season," said senior guard Erin Wilson. "We got pretty far this season, there were a couple of games that we lost, but it wasn't by much. We never had a game that we got blew out by a lot of points, so overall I felt like this was a pretty good season, and we accomplished a lot together."

Wilson has spent most of her life playing basketball, starting at the age of four, and began playing competitively at age six. Coming to UTEP off an Achilles injury, the then-sophomore played a key role in UTEP's rise, playing an average of 16.5 minutes per game. Erin was particularly proud of the team's historic win against Middle Tennessee, as she wanted to relive that moment from the season.

"I think the feeling and the energy that we got from the Middle Tennessee game when we won," Wilson said. "That energy was in the moment, and I would definitely redo that again, with the same results of course."

With the new coaching staff in for the 2023-24 season, Wilson acknowledges the new coaching and training staff and her own goals for the season.

"Next season, I want a ring. That's the bottom line," Wilson said. "I think with this new coaching staff that is coming in, they are very critical on their players, and I think that they're going to bring some good energy, some great people, and I think overall that's the goal, especially before I leave out of this place, I wanted one so bad, last year we were so close, and I think I just want it even more now, so that is the goal."
Andrea Ostos was born in Chihuahua, Mexico and now plays for UTEP Golf.

Photo courtesy of GCU Athletics.

Andrea Ostos’ ‘fairway’ to international success

Like most athletes, Ostos did not start off by playing golf. Starting with tennis, Ostos spent a lot of her time at the local country club in Chihuahua. Ostos finally began playing golf at the age of 10, but her introduction to the sport started much sooner, stemming from her time in Michigan.

“My dad was surrounded by a lot of coworkers that liked to play golf,” Ostos said. “One day, they took him out to play golf. He thought it was a good idea to take us, my older sister and me. I was seven at the time and he bought some $50 golf clubs from Walmart. I came back to Chihuahua the year after, and I didn’t get to play golf until I was about 10. I actually started playing tennis and then I remembered golf?”

When Ostos came to UTEP, she noticed there was a strain on the team’s chemistry. This is something that bothered her, pushing Ostos to help change the culture amongst the team and in the process, she became a leader.

“It was hard for me my freshman year,” Ostos said. “I saw that there was a lot of division on the team. I made myself a promise that I would be more inclusive and have a good environment at all times for everybody, because it’s not easy doing what we do. I do try to lead by example, not so much by words. I’m not giving motivational speeches all the time and stuff but just leading by example.”

Although Ostos is set to graduate this May, she intends to continue her education by completing a master’s in leadership studies. This, along with her bachelor’s in marketing, allows Ostos to start a business after hopefully becoming a professional in the upstart golf association LIV.

“I went to a LIV tournament, which is the older professional golf league in the U.S., and I loved it,” Ostos said. “I would love to go pro, like it’s obviously one of my biggest dreams. I do have a lot of life plans for myself and goals that I’d love to accomplish. I do want to focus and maybe start some businesses here. I’m passionate about food, so I’d love to have many restaurants.”

Despite her commitment to staying in the U.S., Ostos has not forgotten about her home country. “I would love to go back to Mexico at some point and live there again,” Ostos said. “It’s a beautiful country, but I also want to stay around golf if I do not go professional.”

Reflecting on her choice to study in the U.S., Ostos provides advice for those athletes who may be considering the drastic and overwhelming change.

“Hug your parents and your family as much as you can before you come,” Ostos said. “You never really understand the value of being with your family until you leave them. If it’s not your family, your friends, your boyfriend, your girlfriend, whatever it is like, just love the people that you have at home. Be ready to create new memories, new friendships and to not be afraid of being who you are, because eventually, the right people will come to you.”

The spring season is over for the women’s golf team as they competed in the 2023 Conference USA Golf Tournament April 13 through April 15 in Palm Beach, Florida. The team placed eighth overall out of nine teams. Ostos tied for nineteenth at-large and was the highest placed Miner with a plus 16 over par and an average score of just over 77 per round.

Ostos has one more year of eligibility due to the COVID-19 pandemic and plans to keep playing for the Miners.
Congratulations to UTEP’s Doctor of Pharmacy Graduating Class

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