When it comes to the activities and attractions El Paso has to offer, some of the city’s most iconic are age-friendly staples in the borderland. Whether it is cruising down Scenic Drive or taking a splash at Wet ‘n’ Wild during the summer heat, there is always something for groups of families or friends to do. However, one of the most popular forms of entertainment in Sun City is Western Playland, a local amusement park. They offer a variety of rides, carnival games, souvenirs and food options.

Although Western Playland is a staple within the city, there was a recent change in ownership and management for the establishment. Previously owned as a family business by Pat Thomson, the park was turned over to Traders Village after 62 years. According to a KSII article, there are reportedly new plans to expand Western Playland so it includes space for concerts, vendors, new rides, new food, drink options and room for markets in the future.

The grand opening of the amusement park under new ownership took place Feb. 25 and highlighted the inclusion of a new mural at the front gate and more food options at the booths. The mural was made by Tino Ortega, a local artist who has completed all kinds of work across the region. The gate features pops of blues, yellows and reds that not only accentuate the park’s signature colors, but also adds a unique Mexican cultural flair due to the classic mosaic style of the painting. Ortega’s art can be found across the borderland but is most accessible on his Instagram @ortegtino where he shares his work.

In terms of additional rides, the park recently gained one called the “Fireball.” Western Playland has always offered the standard and beloved rollercoasters like “Bandido,” the “Hurricane,” the “Tsunami” and many more. Though there is one that stands out above the rest and is one of the only ones to leave you hanging upside down. The “Loco 360” rotates in a complete circle once or twice around an axis, but the “Fireball” track is a full circle and the boat-like cart structure is attached to the actual rails. The ride is exhilarating because it makes multiple rounds and moves in both directions.

Riders should be warned they need an empty stomach to get on and nerves of steel given how daunting it can be. They should also be equipped with a good sense of humor in case the operator might try and tease nervous park goers. All in all, one of the newer additions was ranked at an eight out of 10 by me and The Prospector photo editor, Annabella Mireles. For park goers who want the full experience, it is recommended to sit at either end of the cart. Those who prefer a tamer rollercoaster ride should sit in the middle.

After a long day of making trips from ride to ride, Western Playland has food booths posted across the park to get refreshments and fill up. The menu includes things like sausage on a stick or bun, churros, loaded nachos, turkey legs, cotton candy, popcorn and chicharrones.
Building my path to citizenship

BY EMMANUEL RIVAS VALLENZUELA

The Prospector staff

Earlier this year, I earned the great honor bestowed upon me by our democracy: citizenship. After a long and expensive journey, I finally became a naturalized citizen of the United States.

My journey began back in 2006 when my stepfather convinced my mother to live in El Paso with him. After a few years, my stepfather got a job in Fort Worth, Texas, which placed my mother and me in line for permanent residency. I vividly remember going through the application process as my biometric appointment was placed in a shopping mall just across the food court.

After becoming a permanent resident in 2009, I went to school where I developed a taste for music, writing and politics. These interests piqued in high school when I joined the schools band and early college program. In band, I had the opportunity to become section leader of the melophone section and became the first chair of the schools wind ensemble. In the classroom, I excelled in my OUrRamps Rhetoric and Writing course while learning more about U.S. History in my OUrRamps history class and my Tarrant County College Dual Credit American Politics. The United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) Policy Manual states “An applicant for naturalization must show that he or she has been, and continues to be, a person of good moral character.” My experiences growing up shaped my character into one suitable for naturalization. Leadership, hard work and kindness are among the characteristics I developed prior to my naturalization. I am clearly not alone in this journey. In 2021, nearly 900,000 individuals earned their right to citizenship each year in the U.S.

I officially started my petition for citizen status in Jan. 2022 when I could finally manage to pay the $725 application fee. At that point, I was a few days out from returning to UTEP for the spring semester. A few weeks later, my biometric appointment was scheduled. The only hitch was the appointment was located back home in Fort Worth. I managed to find about $300 for a round trip plane ticket in early February. I spent a few days away from school and managed to spend some time with my family and friends and I even got to see the newest version of The Batman during opening weekend. After traveling back to El Paso, I waited just about six months for the next phase of my application process: the interview. This was advertised as the make-or-break portion of the whole process. An agent will determine if the petitioner is qualified for citizenship based on a series of spoken and written questions regarding several aspects of U.S. history and social studies. This is where my aptitude from high school kicked in. I passed my citizenship test with ease.

There was a hatch, however. Most individuals who become naturalized are naturalized after the interview. The problem was that my freaking name was misspelled. When my mother applied for my permanent residency, something went wrong, and my green card spelled my name as Emmanuelle Rivas as opposed to Emmanuel Rivas. As a result, all my records read as Emmanuelle. Thankfully, USCIS offers name changes when someone applies for naturalization.

I decided to change my name to its proper spelling and on top of that, I decided to add two additional surnames. The first one would be the family name of my late grandmother, Valenzuela. The second would be my stepfather’s surname, Armendariz. This name change would force me to wait another six months. This brings me to Feb. 7. After another expensive plane ride home, I finally closed the chapter on my permanent residence status and became a U.S. citizen. Over 100 people from various generations from almost 40 different countries filled a room on the campus of something unique and beautiful.

As a USCIS judge swore us in, I looked around the room and saw hundreds of different journeys, stories and struggles. The beauty that makes the U.S. was in that room. I was in that room, the room where it happened. After finishing the Oath of Allegiance, I felt a wave of emotions as the judge congratulated us.

I began to reminisce about everything that had brought me to that moment. My mother, stepfather, friends and family came to mind. The experiences in grade school and UTEP that formed me into the man I am today. The rush brought me to tears. This is not the end of my journey as I fought for the right to vote, run for public office and most importantly, my right to continue my work as a free journalist.

As an immigrant, it’s not easy to navigate a world where a change of name is the only thing one can do to make their identity known. When my mother applied for me to become a citizen, I was torn. On one hand, I wanted to keep my name the same, but on the other hand, I knew that if I were to keep my name the same, I would have to wait another six months for my interview. I chose to change my name to its proper spelling and on top of that, I decided to add two additional surnames. This decision was not an easy one, but it was the right one. I am finally a citizen of the United States, and I am proud of who I am today. The rush brought me to tears. This is not the end of my journey as I fought for the right to vote, run for public office and most importantly, my right to continue my work as a free journalist.

Emmanuel Rivas is an editorial writer for The Prospector at UTEP. His column focuses on immigration, citizenship, and political issues. He can be reached at e.rivas@miners.utep.edu.

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Personal information (phone numbers and address) will be used for identification only. Letters are subject to editing to fit available space, clarity and brevity.
Rival schools fundraise to help migrants

By Avery Escamilla-Mendel

The Prospector

Rival universities, UTEP, New Mexico State University (NMSU) and New Mexico University (UNM) worked together to raise money to donate to an El Paso foundation to buy donations to go towards immigrants seeking asylum in El Paso. The sister school’s student governments had a goal to raise $1,215. With the help of the community, the fundraiser was able to bring back hope for migrants.

Rivals for Relief started due to the growing concern with Title 42 and the large groups of migrants coming to El Paso for asylum. Student Government Association President and international business major, Gabriela Muñoz, mentions how fundraising was brought up to her by NMSU president, Garrett Moseley.

“On social media, I read about how on TikTok and in a New York Times article, Wang on inappropriate touching and harassment allegations. Because of this, Muñoz came forward and accused him defecting his behavior and recognizing his mistakes. He, additionally, set an example to the community and acknowledged the harm that his actions brought.

The mission of the fundraiser was to provide the necessities and essentials migrants need while preparing to start their new life. The associations were able to bring awareness to the El Paso and New Mexico community.

The NMSU President connected with the Community Foundation of Southern New Mexico (CFNSM), which allowed the universities to create the fundraiser. Through CFNSM, people from New Mexico and El Paso would not only be able to donate money to the cause but through this, the schools were able to strengthen their relationship by working on a large scale together.

“I think it was an amazing project just us being able to get together to work on something that could benefit someone,” Muñoz said. “It was a collective effort where everyone could come together to provide the necessities and essentials migrants need while preparing to start their new life. The associations were able to bring awareness to the El Paso and New Mexico community.

The fundraiser was completed on Feb. 17 with an amount of $2,115 raised in total. UTEP was able to raise $290, NMSU raised $1,790, and UNM raised $35.

The Festival of Fashion Week is one of the most anticipated annual events for designers and models, for fashion-lovers and the high-end fashion industry. Despite its glamorous reputation, the beauty of Fashion Week is that it brings people from all over the world to get a sneak peek at the latest fashion trends. Fashion designers can be innovative and freely reinvent themselves on the runway with their vibrant garments, daring silhouettes, and displays. Despite its glamorous reputation, the beauty of Fashion Week is that it brings people from all over the world to get a sneak peek at the latest fashion trends. Fashion designers can be innovative and freely reinvent themselves on the runway with their vibrant garments, daring silhouettes, and displays. The associations were able to share their experiences and understand each other’s views.

“We are impacted very differently than New Mexico is since they are a little further away,” Muñoz said. “For them, I guess it was just different seeing everything like on the news, as opposed to everybody here in our El Paso Student Government Association that could see everything kind of unfolding in our own eyes.”

“But we believe that us as leaders of our institutions couldn’t sit back and let everything unfold,“ Muñoz said. “We have to use our voices to advocate and to stand up for humanitarian rights.”

BY ERIK ACOSTA

The Prospector

With gleaming catwalks and high-end fashion models strutting down the runway, fashion week is one of the most anticipated annual events for designers and models, for fashion-lovers and the high-end clothing associated with it. Despite its glamorous reputation, Fashion Week occasionally stars up quite a bit of controversy by allowing problematic designers to show their creations, having real animal fur walk the runway among other things. As a result, one may ask why they would allow this sort of behavior on the runway.

High-fashion brands like Prada, Diesel and Blumarine highlight their innovative designs to the public but occasionally, some problematic designers are still welcomed kindly and return to fashion’s good graces despite their controversies and pasts. Just earlier this month at New York Fashion Week, celebrities and high-profile editors like Vogue editor Anna Wintour were all present for designer Alexander Wang’s first runway show since 11 men accused him of sexual assault back in 2020. These accusations came to light in December 2020 when model Owen Mooney came forward and accused Wang of inappropriate touching just shortly after stylist and fashion archives David Cavasst recounted a similar experience to The New York Times.

According to Business of Fashion, Mooney shared his experience about Wang on TikTok and in a statement he discussed why he chose to come forward.

“I have never kept what happened to me a secret. I have always been very vocal and open to my friends and family about it,” Mooney said. “I was so sickened and shocked I was not the only victim of this behavior. So, I felt it was necessary to stand up and be a voice for others as well as to speak up.”

From there, multiple people anonymously as well as on the record made statements against Wang to publications such as The Cut, The Guardian and BBC. Wang’s initial response denied these allegations and gaslighted his victims by calling their allegationsfalse and fabricated.

In the wake of the scandal, a shift in Wang’s marketing tactics started to appear along with his sudden focus on Asian American initiatives stroking some as an attempt of Wang deflecting his behavior and unwanted allegations. Shortly after this, in March 2021, Wang issued another statement on his Instagram account. It was the designer’s first acknowledgment of any wrongdoing.

While we disagree on some of the details of these personal interactions, I will set a better example to encourage others to recognize harmful behavior,” Wang said. “Life is about learning and growth, I will do better.”

Since then, Wang has evaded accountability even while his first fashion show in New York received much praise sending a strong message that celebrities were ready to forgive and forget. So, it would be safe to assume that the term cancel culture does not exist in the fashion industry for designers like Wang. Fashion Week, which includes shows in New York, Paris, London, and Milan, which some fashion experts regard as the “Fashion Capital of the World”—takes place twice a year, typically during the spring and fall seasons. To some, the beautiful thing about Fashion Week is that it brings people from all over the world to get a sneak peek at the latest fashion trends. Fashion designers can be innovative and freely reinvent themselves on the runway with their vibrant garments, daring silhouettes, and couture designs.

In last month’s Paris Couture Fashion Week, Schiaparelli, a fashion house, set the tone with exaggerated silhouettes, gloves, and animal heads embellished on some dresses, which shocked some people on the internet. Even though the animal heads were not real, some argued that using them could glorify the killing of animals, which is true in the fashion industry where real fur is unforgiving in our industry. As a creative approach and a start toward using these fake animal heads more elegantly and humanely.

Animal fur has been losing popularity in the last few years due to protests by the fur industry. Designers are adopting new cruelty-free procedures and realizing the harm it causes. Although the fashion industry is on the right track, there is still more work to be done since the industry still allows offensive work from creators.

Designers like Alexander Wang are still invited and applauded during New York Fashion Week despite sexual assault allegations.

Photos courtesy of Eoin Noonan/Flickr

BY ERIK ACOSTA

The Prospector

The fundraiser was completed on Feb. 17 with an amount of $2,115 raised in total. UTEP was able to raise $290, NMSU raised $1,790, and UNM raised $35. The Foundation has not announced which El Paso foundation the money will be donated to. SGA hopes to continue projects with the sister universities in the future. To learn more about future projects, UTEP SGA can be reached at sga.utep.edu and on Instagram @ utepsga.
PLAYLAND from COVER

While not many big changes have been made yet, this new managing company will hopefully take every opportunity to expand the business in the ways it has been advertised. El Paso has many local businesses and vendors for those market events and much room for adding more rides. As of right now there are more talks of Western Playland hosting events throughout the season to keep the community entertained.

“This summer we’re going to have live music and fireworks and then we’re also talking to vendors about coming and doing little pop-up tents,” said Lee Ann Murray, Marketing Director for Traders Village.

“Thanks to COVER PLAYLAND the community will hopefully take every opportunity to expand the business that many institutions of higher learning utilize as a way to process accommodations for students with disabilities. It consists of nine certificates within EPCC majors, not only accommodating their needs but giving college support.

Students are not required to take the TSI or do any of the university core curriculum, instead every student who applies goes through a review process by Volar Independent Living Center (CIL) Committee which directly accepts and places them within the program. Currently, there are 25 spots, each carrying over to graduation, given their necessary support every step of the way. Even since its conception in 2015 in EPCC, it has had 56 graduates, with a high retention rate; some of them continuing to pursue their associate degree and others working for organizations such as Children with Disabilities: Youth Leadership.

As of right now there are more talks of Western Playland hosting events throughout the season to keep the community entertained.

“This summer we’re going to have live music and fireworks and then we’re also talking to vendors about coming and doing little pop-up tents,” said Lee Ann Murray, Marketing Director for Traders Village, in a KSTM article.

For more information on the park and its operating hours, visit west-ernplayland.com. You can follow its socials on Instagram or Facebook for updates on the park’s status as weather conditions change.

*Images haven't been approved yet and may be reached at megarcia19@miners.utep.edu.

We got a new owner in the ways it has been advertised. El Paso has many local businesses and vendors for those market events and much room for adding more rides.

TOP LEFT: The “Hurricane” is one of Western Playland’s more popular roller coasters.

BOTTOM LEFT: Attendees ride the Loco 360 during the reopening of Western Playland Feb. 26.

BOTTOM RIGHT: Guests running the “Sky Glider”, one of Western Playland’s more kid-friendly rides with a minimum height requirement of 36".

All photos by Annabella Mireles/The Prospector

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Striking a ‘HIGHER’ goal

BY EUGENIO CANTU

The Prospector

The path to success is paved with hard work and big dreams and it is also a path that is very different for everyone where people need great mentors to guide them every step of the way. El Paso Community College (EPCC) has successfully created another step for students to achieve their goals.

As part of the Valle Verde campus and their Center of Students with Disabilities (CSD), Project HIGHER is an initiative which brings tutoring, coaching, advising and materials to students with various disabilities.

It consists of nine certificates within EPCC majors, not only accommodating their needs but giving college support. Students are not required to take the TSI or do any of the university core curriculum, instead every student who applies goes through a review process by Volar Independent Living Center (CIL) Committee which directly accepts and places them within the program.

Currently, there are 25 spots, each carrying over to graduation, given their necessary support every step of the way.

Ever since its conception in 2015 in EPCC, it has had 56 graduates, with a high retention rate; some of them continuing to pursue their associate degree and others working for organizations such as Children with Disabilities: Youth Leadership.

Their current graduating class will be the largest with eight graduates this Spring.

Four agencies came together to collaborate on the project, Volar CIL, created the admission committee, University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) provided interns and counselors, Region 19 Educational Services Center as additional research and educators, and Texas Workforce provided funding for these positions.

The positions would eventually be incorporated into the EPCC system, creating better opportunities as well as expanding the project into the campus.

Even during the pandemic, Project HIGHER didn’t shut down but faced its own challenges.

“The manager position was frozen as well as others,” said CSD Director and EPCC alumni Maria Lopez. Before Lopez took on the position two years ago, she had been working for EPCC for over 20 years. Lopez explained both her and Alejandra Mendoza were hired during the middle of the pandemic.

“We faced our own difficulties, but we keep pushing,” Mendoza said.

In Project HIGHER it seems that nothing can stop the progress of success and that any student’s intellect can overcome any challenge and they can always reach for HIGHER dreams.

Eugenio Cantu is a contributor and may be reached at ecantu3@miners.utep.edu.
As the weeks of spring semester have gone by, new campus events and recurring ones are steadily rolling out. One such event that signals the start of UTEP’s theatrical productions for the semester is the year’s first play, “Heroes and Saints.” A play by Chicana feminist, poet, activist, essayist and playwright Cherríe Moraga; the production is set on the backdrop of issues that are political, social, religious etc. “This play is about the struggles of living in fields and how a lot of women were oppressed during this time,” said Daniela Chavez, a theater performance major at UTEP. “It’s basically a very empowering play aimed towards women, how we take a lot of the things that men don’t. I am playing Ana Perez, the reporter. She just shows up throughout the play to do her job, but then (she) gets more involved with the community and stuff.”

The drama is set in the 1980s and takes place in the fictional town of McLaughlin, Calif., which is based on the real town of McFarland. It centers around Mexican immigrant farm workers and citizens in the town who are affected by the toxic pesticides in the fields nearby. The effects from living near the fields vary from terminal illnesses to birth defects. Combined with, unsafe working conditions inspired the town’s people to take a stand against the problems, while trying to solve their own personal ones. “It’s kind of out there. It has some pretty, kind of scandalous scenes, and it touches on multiple issues,” said Lucero Mendoza, a theater performance major at UTEP. “There’s a lot of pain and sensitive topics. I would describe this play as very unapologetic. I play Amparo. She is an older woman who starts the snowball of the protests. She is the main leader of this little revolution in their town, and she really is the voice for everybody in the town as far as trying to seek justice.”

The play focuses on a couple of residents in the small town, including the Valle Family. The family consists of four characters: Dolores, the religious mother, Yolanda, a daughter who has become a mother to Evalina, Mario, who hides his sexuality from his mother, and Cerecita, the youngest, who was born without a body and is seen in the play as just a head on top of a moving box. Other characters include a Catholic priest named Juan and Amparo, a friend of the Valle Family and activist for the residents of McLaughlin and more.

The play dives into the dilemmas of each character, from physical deformities to clashes with faith. All the characters’ issues were portrayed with perfection and each of their stories brought the big picture to life. “I definitely think it’s an important thing to show the community because these things are still happening,” said Darenika Zamora, a theater major in performance at UTEP and an ensemble actress in the play. “Even though it was written a long time ago, there’s still a lot of cases with kids who are born with health problems, and there’s not a lot of change. I did a little bit of research on it, and I think about 11,000 people die a year in America alone due to pesticides. So, we have all of this information and still nothing is happening.”

In emotional scenes and even some risqué moments, “Heroes and Saints” was a bold start for UTEP’s 2023 theater season. Despite the play’s age, it still proves to be a relevant story that tells of issues still happening to many in modern-day America. “This play was written a while ago and it’s in the eighties, yet it has so many topics that we still see today,” said Daniela Mendoza, a theater performance major at UTEP and ensemble actress in the play. “That’s why it’s also important to showcase this play, so we can be more aware of all this.”

Photo by Annabella Mireles/The Prospector

The Prospector
‘Art Bridges’ exhibitions at the EP Museum of Art

By H. Catching Marginot
The Prospector

The city of El Paso is home to many famous and important historical landmarks, especially in the city’s lively downtown area. One notable spot is the El Paso Museum of Art (EPMA) in the Downtown Art District.

Founded in 1959, EPMA has had many opportunities in having highlighted thousands of pieces such as, a portrait of George Washington by Gilbert Stuart. Other works exhibited, including Stuart’s, has been pulled from many parts of the world, as well as different periods in our history.

With much history to include in one building, many institutions try bringing the best to the EPMA, but one who is achieving the museum’s mission to spread the creative and artistic visions of talented individuals is Art Bridges, an organization that helps museums produce art collections to help platform visions that may not have platforms otherwise.

Three collections currently running in the Museum of Art are “There is a Woman in Every Color: Black Women in Art,” Hank Willis Thomas: Art Bridges loan,” and “Vanessa German: Art Bridges loan.” All three are being head sponsored by Art Bridges.

The first collection, “There is a Woman in Every Color: Black Women in Art,” focuses on the artistic and general representation of Black women over the past two centuries. With more than forty different works collected from Bowdoin College Museum of Arts, each unique piece displays the true reality of marginalization of Black women over a long stretch of time. Each piece can range from selected paintings, photographs and even objects like artistic sculptures and historical books.

Noteworthy artists to be included in the collection vary from famous New York born sculptor, Edmonia Lewis to influential photographer, Carrie Mae Weems. “There is a Woman in Every Color: Black Woman in Art” is currently showing and ends May 14.

The second collection showcased one of Thomas’ more specific installations. A piece called “Pitch Blackness / Off Whiteness,” by American conceptual artist, Hank Willis Thomas, Thomas, the 46-year-old artist, based in Brooklyn, New York, aims to confront the themes of perspective and identity in our current standing society. He tackles these themes head on with his conceptual approach while also exploring why oftentimes America has commodified what it means to be Black.

Hank Willis Thomas explores how American society commodifies Black male identity. Photo by Jasmin Campoya/The Prospector

The piece is inspired by the roots of Folk Art, combining fluid assertions of emotion and energy all squeezed into one sculpture. German creates a piece of art showing off your colorful personality and flying through the world while doing so.

“Black Girl on Skateboard Going Where She’s Got to Go to Do What She’s Got to Do and It Might Not Have Anything to Do With You, Ever,” is currently showing now and leaves the museum May 31 of next year.

Each piece from these collections and the different artists attached show what it means to create strong and creative art dedicated to and from the Black community.

For more information visit the El Paso Museum of Art website.
Softball closes UTEP Invitational with loss to No. 4 Oklahoma State

BY EMMANUEL RIVAS VALENZUELA
The Prospector

Following a frustrating end to the Dr. Diana Natalicio Tournament over a week ago, the UTEP softball team found some success at the UTEP Invitational Tournament. UTEP hosted the Cal State-Bakersfield Roadrunners (3-12), University of Missouri at Kansas City Roos (3-10), Tarleton State Texans (11-7), Creighton Bluejays (6-8) and the No.4 ranked Oklahoma State Cowgirls (13-1). The tournament ran from Friday, Feb. 24 to Sunday, Feb. 26 at the Helen of Troy Softball Complex.

To start the team’s weekend, the Miners faced the Cal State Roadrunners at 4 p.m. Friday. There, the Miners got off to a strong start going up four runs at the end of the second inning. Junior outfielder Ashlynn Allen bombed a two-run homer toward left center field in the bottom of the second. Sophomore infielder Ryan Donner and senior infielder Pate Cathey would go on to score after junior outfielder Lexi Morales found herself on base.

The Roadrunners would climb back in the top of the fourth, scoring three runs. Unfortunately for the Roadrunners, these would be the final runs for the game. At the bottom of the fifth, the Miners began to stretch the lead after hitting seven runs that started with a solo hit from junior outfielder Ildalis Mendez. UTEP followed with six runs. The bottom of the seventh inning allotted the Miners a final run placing the final score at 12-4 in favor of UTEP.

The Miners would play a second game that same day at 7 p.m., against the University of Missouri at Kansas City (UMKC) Roos. The first inning was quiet on both sides, but the Miners would go on top and break the silence at the bottom of the second inning scoring four runs. Thanks to a single from Morales, Cathey was able to run in to secure the 4-0 lead and end the second inning. The Roos would answer with two runs at the top of the third.

Closing UTEP’s lead, UMKC’s momentum would soon shift back to the Miners thanks to two runs at the bottom of the frame. UTEP would not give up its lead to the Roos winning the game 8-6. The following day, the Miners faced the Tarleton Texas Texans at 4 p.m. and the Creighton Bluejays at 7 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 25. The Miners kicked off the day with a win over Tarleton. UTEP only trailed in the first inning where the Texans scored a single run. From there, the Miners would note four runs to close out the second. After three quiet innings, the Texans and Miners would exchange runs in the sixth inning to push the score to 5-2 in favor of UTEP.

Later that day, UTEP would go through its first loss of the tournament falling to the Creighton Bluejays 10-2. The Miners struggled to get anything going, only scoring its two runs in the bottom of the fourth. The Bluejays started out strong, going up five runs in the first. The Miners would go through four pitchers through the course of the game.

Finally, the Miners faced No.4 Oklahoma State University (OSU) at noon Sunday, Feb. 26. The Miners did not struggle to score, noting six runs against the ranked Cowgirls, but failed to curb OSU’s scoring allowing 10 runs to close out the tournament with two straight losses for the Miners.

Moving forward, the Miners travel to Albuquerque, N.M. for a doubleheader against the New Mexico Lobos (6-9) at 3 p.m. and 5 p.m. Wednesday, March 1 at the Lobos Softball Field.

The next home match for UTEP will be against Western Kentucky (9-6) at 6 p.m. Friday, March 17 at the Helen of Troy Softball Complex in El Paso, Texas.

All stats and scores for UTEP courtesy of UTEP Athletics, step-miners.com.

Emmanuel Rivas Valenzuela is the sports editor of The Prospector and may be reached at erivas7@miners.utep.edu.

Softball closes UTEP Invitational with loss to No. 4 Oklahoma State

TNAS to look into Las Vegas Aces cap

BY KATRINA VILLAREAL
The Prospector

The Women’s National Basketball Association (WNBA) is currently investigating the 2022 WNBA champions, the Las Vegas Aces, for allegations regarding under-the-table payments to players.

According to the Las Vegas Review-Journal, The Next, the Aces are accused of having calls with free agents and current players to discuss contract extensions. The Next mentions that the Aces were offering a specific amount of money from a pre-existing company that could later be negotiated. This would be a violation of the WNBA’s salary cap. If the allegations are proven to be true, ESPN explains it would lead to significant disciplinary actions by the WNBA since the New York Liberty were fined $500,000 for unsanctioned chartered flights to away games during the 2021 season.

In the WNBA’s collective bargaining agreement, Article XV states that “a team or team affiliate is not allowed to enter into an agreement in which a third party offers a player compensation for services.” After the Aces won the 2022 WNBA championships, the allegations began to rise. During the off-season, the Las Vegas Aces signed two-time MVP Candace Parker to a $100,000 contract and two-time WNBA champion Alysha Clark to a two-year $220,000 contract. The Aces have also resigned Kia Stokes to a one-year contract.

“I am heartbroken. Being traded is a part of the business. Being lied to, bullied, manipulated, and discriminated against is not. I have had my character and work ethic attacked. I was promised things to entice me to sign my contract extension that were not followed through on. I was accused of signing my exten- sion knowingly pregnant. This is false. I was told that I was a ques- tion mark and that it was said that I said I would ‘get pregnant again’ and there was a concern for my level of commitment to the team. I was told that I ‘didn’t hold up my end of the bargain’ because ‘no one expected me to get pregnant in the two years’ that the team expect me to promise not to get pregnant in exchange for the contract extension.’ I was asked if I planned my pregnancy. When I responded, ‘no’ I was then told that I was ‘taking precautions to not get pregnant.’ I was being traded because ‘I wouldn’t be ready, and I was being traded because ‘I wouldn’t be ready, and

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Mexican Federation names new manager

The Prospector

It was announced earlier this month that Argentinian, Diego Cocca, was selected by the Mexican Soccer Federation to manage the Mexican National Soccer Team. This is following the departure of Martin “El Tato” Martino after a disappointing World Cup run. Martino left with a record of 42-12-12 record with Mexico.

“I am the first or person responsible for this terrible disappoint- ment and frustration that we have,” said Martino after announcing his departure. “As the person in charge, it causes a lot of sadness, I fully as- sume responsibility for this failure. Cocca comes from Club de Fútbol Tigres (Tigres Football Club) where he managed the team for a little over a month. Bouncing from club to club, Cocca was a member of clubs such as Club Atlético (Athletic Club) River Plate, Unión Española (Española United) Lleida and Atlas where he would later coach. Cocca began his managerial career in 2008 with the Argen- tinian club Godoy Cruz Antonio Tomba. His first foyter into Mexican football came when Cocca joined Santos Laguna in 2011.

The announcement came as a surprise to some including Argentin- ian sports journalist Flavio Azarro. “When we learned that Diego Cocca was appointed as coach of the Mexican National Team, I was surprised because in Argentina he failed with Racing and Rosario Central, I think this could happen with the Mexican National Team,” Azarro said.

“We are going to work to avoid making ourselves ridiculous, as we have been doing lately,” said Ignacio Mite Velasco, a member of the Chamber of Deputies, “the failure to advance in Qatar cannot hap- pen again, especially in a country with all the soccer tradition that exists in Mexico.”

This hiring was a part of a national initiative by the lower house of Mexico’s congress to transform soc- cer in Mexico.

“I believe a lot in Mexican soccer players and their talent,” Cocca said after his hiring. “But talent is not enough. You have to give them a whole lot of tools so they can take of, and that is my goal, I want to make them take off.”

Mexico is set to face Suriname in the CONCACAF Nations League March 23 which will serve as qualifi- cations for the CONCACAF Gold Cup. Mexico fell in the 2019 finals match to the United States. Cocca will be the third straight manager who is not Mexican and the fifth Argentinian to manage the Mexican National Soccer Team.

According to Alejandro Delgado, he is the team’s director and may be reached at a-team@ministeriodelasport.com or contato@ministeriodelasport.com.
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Katrina Villarreal is the multimedia editor and may be
renewed 1041.1@miners.utep.edu
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