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THE PAN AMERICAN

65 YEARS

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS - PAN AMERICAN™

Volume 65, No. 26

THE PAN AMERICAN

April 8, 2009

STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

# Executive and referendum results announced

## 'Raghu,' Setien to face off in runoff election

By Brian Silva  
THE PAN AMERICAN

Runoff elections are currently under way for the Student Government

Association's executive officers after the general election returns didn't meet percentage requirements.

The process has been working since Monday and will end today at midnight. Ballots were sent to students' e-mails early Monday morning.

The two executive tickets in the runoff are: Raghuvveer Puttagunta and running mate Shaney Flores, who received 37 percent of the vote; and

Marco Setien and Shirley Edinborough, who received 21.8 percent of the vote.

In order for a candidate to win in the general election he or she must achieve at least 50 percent of the vote.

The campaign has been a bit contentious during the past week with over 10 informal complaints concerning campaign regulations, according to Elections Chair Marcos Silva. He

explained that the complaints aren't anything major, more along the lines of posting regulations, like where a sign is posted and one sign being placed over another.

The runoff results will be announced later in the week once the tallies have been finalized. The new executive team will serve a term of one year and will take office effective April 16.

Results were also announced for the student referendums on legislation currently going through the Texas Legislature.

The first question asked students if concealed handguns should be allowed on higher education campuses. A vast majority of students shouted down that idea, by a 1,133-to-218 vote.

Silva, who also serves as president of SGA || PAGE 5

DISTINGUISHED SPEAKER SERIES

## Shepard speaks on value of human rights

By Ana Villaurrutia  
THE PAN AMERICAN

Judy Shepard admits that she has never been a natural public speaker, but after 11 years of turning her tragedy into a story of awareness, she spoke confidently to a packed auditorium at the closing of UTPA's Distinguished Speaker Series Tuesday night.

The gay rights activist and mother of Matthew Shepard, a homosexual who died after being tortured outside of Laramie, Wyo., in 1998, spoke to students and the community about current-day sexuality/human rights issues.

Since her son's death she has given such talks across the country and founded the Matthew Shepard Foundation in order to spread awareness and acceptance of diversity.

"I really think that at the root of it

all is fear of not understanding, fear of what we don't know, and fear of what we don't understand," Shepard told the crowd at the Fine Arts Auditorium.

Shepard opened her speech with a video presenting the story of James Byrd, an African-American man from Jasper in East Texas who was killed by Ku Klux Klan members in 1998, a few months before Matthew's death. Both high-profile cases serve as a reminder of a period of tragedy and hate in America.

"It was a very horrific nine months in this country's psyche, the hate was palpable," said Shepard. "If we think racism is an issues that is over, it isn't...it's across the board in all communities."

Since her son's death, Shepard has educated and lobbied to make hate-

SEE SHEPARD || PAGE 5



Ben Briones/THE PAN AMERICAN

**DIVERSE COMMUNITY** - Psychology major Erika Perez gets a pamphlet signed at a reception after Distinguished Speaker Judy Shepard gave an enlightening speech at the Fine Arts Auditorium Tuesday evening.

ACADEMICS

## Texas nurse demand exceeds supply

By Naxiely Lopez  
THE PAN AMERICAN

In a time of economic uncertainty and a rapidly increasing unemployment rate, there is one field that seems to be recession-proof - nursing. In Texas alone, demand for full-time nurses exceeds supply by 22,000 and is projected to widen to 70,000 by 2020. However, this demand is not likely to be met because there are not enough nurses graduat-

ing each year, a fact that has been brought to the attention of the education system.

In 2007, Texas nursing schools graduated 7,000 new registered nurses, including 61 from the University of Texas- Pan American. Even though this represents a 55-percent state increase since 2001, it's not enough to close the gap. As Americans use the health care system and spend more on it each year, the

need for professionals to administer the system is outpacing the normal growth of those pros.

Ironically, numbers show that a shortage of nursing graduates is not due to lack of interest in the field by students. Just last year, 8,000 qualified applicants were turned away by Texas nursing schools due primarily to a shortage of qualified faculty willing to teach at prevailing sala-

SEE NURSING || PAGE 5

ADMINISTRATION

## Faculty Senate elections to start, usher in leadership

By Alejandra Martinez  
THE PAN AMERICAN

As student government run-off elections wrapped up, voting will begin today for the Faculty Senate. The elections will run from April 8-14, and the results will be announced April 15.

This year there are two vacancies

in the College of Arts and Humanities, one in the College of Business Administration, two in the College of Science and Engineering, one in the College of Social Behavioral Sciences, one in the College of Health Sciences and Human Services, and one in the library.

Nominations closed last Monday. SEE FACULTY || PAGE 5

# OPINION

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THE PAN AMERICAN

April 8, 2009

## Opinion

### Valley people should speak out about issues

Victor Ituarte  
A&L Reporter

Sitting in the restroom at Book-People in Austin, I couldn't help but notice the numbers on the stall wall didn't represent phone numbers, but rather money: "OBAMA = 8.8 tril in 1st 2 wks." accompanied by an illustration of the flag of the Soviet Union. Not too far off next to it was "BLAME THE MILITARY INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX."

Whether I agree or disagree on either is not the point. I was more excited by the fact that it wasn't someone's recommendation on who to call for "a good time" or an indicator of gang turf. What I saw before me was an example of people (I can only assume they were men in this case) speaking for something they believed in.

While there is definitely a presence of voices, movements, and activism down here in the Big V (for Valley), there need to be more, as well as support for a wider variety of causes.

People who don't speak up are preventing progress. I garnered enthusiastic support after posting an argument on a social networking Web site against something I disagreed with related to an upcoming campus event. Being applauded for my efforts was not enough because I became aware of a silent opposition after several days.

There were those who should have either responded in opposition or corrected any misinformation. Nobody did so until I was standing in their crosshairs or they spoke through a proxy, and not until several days after related social circles were already discussing it.

Despite my writing's potential to bring more stress into my atmosphere, it is a perfect example of how I wish the powers that be would've taken a stand and spoken out to defend their group.

If you believe something is wrong, speak up! "A time comes when silence is betrayal," said Martin Luther King Jr.

## Illustrated Opinion



Illustration by Anthony Salinas

## Opinion

### Vote to influence your future

Brian Silva  
Managing Editor

Elections are the center point to any democratic republic, and our university is currently undertaking this challenge to cast a ballot, as is tradition for most governmental organizations.

It is true to call this a challenge. You can't tell me it isn't whenever I have to read through the gobs of B.S. candidates post up that they can't accomplish.

I know I'm broad-brushing every candidate, but it's just about true in terms of a select few stated candidate objectives.

Who honestly can do something about parking? That is an age-old issue that you can see in every yearbook since the concrete foundation was laid down on campus. It isn't even limited to this university. Every higher education institution suffers through the issue.

I give credit to those who have said that parking convenience is something they'll work on. Adding a shuttle bus or two is within their realm of power.

For the issues of convenience I will voice my opinion via the case of a ballot, or push of the "send" button in this case. If you're reading this, you need to get to your e-mail and vote too.

Don't think that just because it's a runoff it's not important. Don't think that just because it's an election for President of SGA it's not important.

It indeed is important because of those things. It is all the more important because of the challenges our university faces during the latest state legislative session. We are faced with the harsh reality that increases in funding will be sparse; in fact, as it looks, most universities will take cuts.

Administrators can pat us on the back and give us their sympathies. However it is the leaders of our student government who represent us and can voice through their experiences our views. They can tell the decision makers the full truth of what it's like for students.

Yes, we as students care about the little conveniences. There's a much broader call to duty for our future executive team and senators, though. That call is to assure the students of this university that our institution will be fully accessible and available to them, even during this time of economic downturn.

Student government leaders are invested with greater power than any purse string they can pull. Your voice is the students' greatest asset. With it you can persuade, lobby and educate

community leaders and legislators about the issues students face. They will listen if you tell them. Legislators don't know how much the TEXAS Grant impacts people unless someone tells them.

Right now, the only people telling them about the impact of funding and the grant are our administrators. But, the Lege hears from gray-haired administrators about what the costs and benefits are all the time.

They need to hear it from the horse's mouth.

Your vote is your individual voice. After you cast a ballot keep the fire lit under your elected leaders. All of them, from SGA to state legislators, need to know the impact of impending decisions.

Today is the last day to vote in the runoff. Go vote. If you don't, then don't bitch when funding is reduced for the university, and in turn your department. Don't bitch if the TEXAS Grant changes and you're suddenly not eligible for the monies you once received.

You're voting not just for the conveniences, but for the future of this university. Our campus is the greatest and most powerful economic engine the Valley has.

Vote to support your community.

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**\*\*Delivery\*\***

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#### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Pan American accepts letters of 300 words or less from students, staff and faculty regarding recent newspaper content, campus concerns or current events. The Pan American reserves the right to edit submissions for grammar and length. The Pan American cannot publish anonymous letters or submissions containing hate speech or gratuitous personal attacks. Please send all story ideas to thepanamerican@gmail.com.

Individuals with disabilities wishing to acquire this publication in an alternative format or needing assistance to attend any event listed can contact The Pan American for more details.

**Easter Holiday - No Class**  
Friday, April 10  
UTPA

**Deadline to file application for fall graduation**  
Friday, April 17  
8 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
Registrar

ACADEMICS

## Speaker to discuss business success methods

By Matt Flores  
THE PAN AMERICAN

Students looking to become the next John D. Rockefeller or perhaps the next Donald Trump may be interested in attending the entrepreneurship speaker series tonight.

At 7:10 p.m. to 9 p.m. the University of Texas-Pan American will host the second speaker in the entrepreneurship speaker series, Dr. Olivier Wenker, in the Engineering Auditorium. The first

speaker in the second annual series was David Guerra, the president of IBC in McAllen and that event took place on Feb. 11.

The next speaker will be Dr. Jaime Parada, who works with the government in Mexico to try and create businesses that focus on nanotechnology and information technology. He is scheduled to appear April 15.

Tonight's speaker, Wenker, is a professor of anesthesiology and director of technology discovery at the MD

Anderson Cancer Center in Houston. According to the Anderson Web site, Wenker obtained his medical degree from the University of Zurich, Switzerland in 1983.

He is the entrepreneur and founder of three companies and in 1995 started Internet Scientific Publications, one of the largest independent medical publishing houses online.

At the event, he plans to speak about his work at the MD Anderson Cancer Center and entrepreneurship training,

putting as he says, "ideas from napkin into product." He will also share his own experience as an entrepreneur and his latest business ventures.

"I have gotten into anti-aging medicine and have become board certified (in the field of anti-aging medicine) and work in nutritional medicine now," he said.

In 1990, Wenker first tried starting up an online service selling cars, but he may have been a little ahead of his time because the Internet was not what

it is today.

"The problem was there was no Internet, we had an Internet company, but there was really no Internet," Wenker said. "So that tells you a little about timing and being too early with some good ideas."

He said his latest venture was paying off well and he believes a good entrepreneur is someone who is a risk-taker.

"You cannot be afraid and you have

SEE WENKER || PAGE 6

STUDENT ACTIVITY

## Week aims to shed light on migrant issues

By John Gallagher  
THE PAN AMERICAN

Diana Garcia is a professor at the University of California Monterey Bay and came to give a workshop on writing for social action. The lecture promoted service learning classes and the methods by which people can become a part of the social action process.

Last week the Mexican American Studies Program celebrated National Farmworker Awareness Week, with a program shedding light on problems migrant immigrants continue to face.

The week was planned by several campus organizations, The Association of Migrant Students (AMS), College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP), Cosecha Voices, and the English department.

The week included meetings at which each of the groups raised

awareness of various migrant situations. CAMP focused on college-oriented issues migrants face, while AMS focused on the promotion and documentation of migrant voices in America.

Cosecha president Annabel Salamanca, a 21-year-old business major from Mission, helped plan Farmworker Awareness Week and said the event would help spread the voice of Mexican immigrants and build support.

"We aim to document and support migrant voices, so we helped sponsor and spread the word about the lecture and meetings this week," she said.

The week is celebrated throughout the country and coincides with the birthday of farmworker and migrant activist Cesar Chavez, March 31.

Events featured a petition to make

SEE FARMWORKER || PAGE 6



Isaac Barrientes/ THE PAN AMERICAN

**FRESH AWARENESS** - Junior business management majors Mari Lopez (right), and Christina Lopez grab a nice *agua fresca* while learning about migrant issues during Farmworker Awareness Week.

ACADEMICS

## Record first-year retention at university best in state

By Abby Flores  
THE PAN AMERICAN

With expectations and plans of graduation, thousands of students choose the path of higher education at The University of Texas-Pan American each year.

Now, they are staying the course in record numbers. Since 2000, first-year retention rates have increased significantly by 9.9 percent, making the school's rate higher than any other such public institution in the state.

In the past, UTPA struggled to keep students in the mix, but that has changed.

According to the State Accountability System, which provides actual figures of students enrolled at the university every year, new student retention has increased consistently, rising to 70.9 percent for the fall 2007 cohort that continued in fall 2008.

Ten years ago, only 55 percent of students returned to UTPA for their second year of higher education; by 2007, the number had increased by almost 16 percent.

Sandra Gutierrez of Harlingen, a freshman majoring in literature, chose UTPA because of its location

and efforts that have been done to make it a better university for everyone.

"The staff at the university looks at different opportunities to help students succeed and focus while in college," she said. "Keeping us here until graduation is very important I'm very glad with my decision."

In many cases, the first years present the problem of surviving college life and keeping the drive to earn a degree.

The organization charged with keeping students once they enroll is the University Retention Advise-

ment Program (URAP).

Its plan has been to build a partnership between students and various academic and support service units in order to assure successful student integration into the university community and the progression toward educational goals.

URAP offers several support services to the students, the UNIV course, the Advisement and Academic Mentoring Center, and the Sophomore Academic Mentoring Program.

Both mentoring programs are to keep students focused on taking the

correct courses on their degree plan and to offer tutoring or guidance throughout the beginning years at the university level.

"The entire university is working towards helping students reach graduation. It's not only the effort of the URAP center that has made a change in student retention," said Marta Lopez, director of the URAP center.

The overall number of new candidates for retention has increased, as in 2007 a total of 2,527 registered as first-time, full-time students, in contrast to only 1,713 in 1997.

SEE RETENTION || PAGE 6

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# NURSING continued from Page 1

ries, a problem the Texas Nursing Workforce Shortage Coalition is hoping to solve.

At a news conference Feb. 6 the coalition, which is an alliance between health care organizations, business groups, and education leaders working to address the shortage, called on the Texas Legislature to provide an additional \$60 million for nursing education.

That money would be allocated to schools enabling them to increase enrollment through several methods, including the hiring of more faculty members.

The coalition's goal is to increase the number of registered nurses from all schools in Texas to 13,000 by 2013.

"This affects all of us," said Amanda Engler, Texas Hospital Association spokesperson. "There is a huge problem with vacancies at hos-

pitals statewide. If a hospital is not fully staffed, they will close beds, and that means one less ICU bed for someone who needs it."

UTPA has seen a steady increase in the number of enrollments since 1967 when it first started its associate's degree program. Currently, the university offers a bachelor's and a master's degree only. There are 110 students admitted into the program, and there are approximately 200 undergraduate students.

"We're already ripping at the seams," said UTPA Nursing Chair Carolina Huerta in reference to the number of students enrolled in the nursing program. "We need at least two more faculty members to alleviate the workload."

Huerta said that although there are 25 faculty members, herself included, the university hires anywhere from one to seven part-time

employees each semester in order to keep up with the enrollment.

"The board of nursing says that each faculty that takes students to the clinical area can't take more than 10 students, so we use part-timers to help out with that," Huerta said. "We are an expensive program, and we have to comply with the board in order to continue to operate."

She worries that having too many part-timers will dilute the quality of the program.

However, she also mentions that any part-time employee who takes a full group of students to clinicals must have their master's degree in nursing, a feat, she says, made possible by UTPA.

"Before our MSN program, it was really difficult to find nurses with a master's degree in the Valley," she says. "We've really improved healthcare. We have produced about 140 MSNs since 1996."

If the Texas Legislature agrees with the coalition and decides to add \$60M for nursing education, schools with a 70 percent graduation rate or higher would be eligible for monies upfront. Those below

that mark, however, would only receive 50 percent upfront and would have to enter into a contract in which they would be held accountable for a specific set increase in their graduation numbers.

Once agreed upon benchmarks are met, the rest of the money would be distributed.

"The money that would be allocated to schools can only be used to increase graduation numbers," Engler said. "They can hire faculty, increase salaries, or develop programs like study groups that would help students with their classes, and ultimately help them graduate. Our goal is to increase graduation numbers."

According to a 2008 study by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, UTPA had a 60.8 percent graduation rate in 2007. However, a new study for 2008 places UTPA at a 79.73 percent, thus making it eligible to receive money upfront.

It is important to note, however, that the rate is based only on students who graduate in a timely manner.

Students who take longer than 4 years to graduate, as is sometimes the case at UTPA, are not calculated

in the study.

"We won't know how much money anyone is getting until the legislative session closes and a budget conference committee is formed," Engler added. "What we do know is that we're already getting more money than we were getting before. We're hoping they will appropriate the full amount the coalition is requesting."

Huerta believes UTPA is in a good position to receive money.

"We have an excellent program. UTPA is second in terms of our BSN programs' NCLEX pass rates for UT schools," she said. "What we are lacking is faculty that has enough time to work on grants and research."

The U.S. Department of Labor says overall job opportunities for registered nurses are expected to be excellent.

Employment of registered nurses is expected to grow 23 percent from 2006 to 2016, much faster than the average for all occupations.

"Our students have no problem finding jobs," Huerta added. "It's a comfortable job that provides for a good living, but it's a difficult one."

**"We already ripping at the seams, we need at least two more faculty members to alleviate the workload."**

**Carolina Huerta**  
UTPA nursing chair

# FACULTY continued from Page 1

Some of the nominees include Emmy Perez from the department of English in the COAH, Nigel Cohen in the COBA, and Andrew McDonald from the biology department in the College of Science and Engineering.

McDonald says he's running for Senate because he wants to be more involved with the faculty community on campus.

"I'm established, I have my academic and research life together," McDonald said. "I'm interested in the decision-making process and what is going on at that level."

The Senate is a group on campus that represents faculty the way that the Student Government Association represents students.

Its job is to deliberate on university policies and to review and sometimes revise procedures in the Handbook of Operating Procedures, or HOP.

The body focuses on issues that impact and affect faculty, such as their ability to teach and do research. It also appoints other faculty members to various committees on campus.

"As we have transitioned to a more research-intensive university," explained Danika Brown, assistant professor of English and Senate chair. "Policies regarding the awarding of tenure and promotion, policies on workload and research leave, and other rules need to be revised."

Some of the current issues being addressed are the drop and incomplete policy, putting up online course

syllabi on Banner by registration day, completing online student evaluations, and reviewing policies in the HOP.

"The HOP policies for faculty issues are regularly reviewed in order to insure that they reflect our needs and current practices," Brown explained. "We deliberate on issues such as academic policies, resource allocation, and program development."

To be eligible to run for Faculty Senate, candidates must meet the following requirements: have completed two years of full-time employment at the university and continue working full-time while serving in the senate.

All positions carry a three-year term, with each college having a number of representatives proportionate to the size of that college.

"Those terms are rotating, so at any given time there will be openings in each college," Brown said.

Her term as chair will end this semester and the chair-elect, Dr. Rajiv Nambiar, will occupy that position next year.

"We rotate them so there are always veteran senators, so when new senators come in, it's not a whole new senate," Brown added.

The new Senate will hold its first meeting with the chair April 22 at 2:45 p.m. in the Math Building, following the last meeting of the current body. Regular meetings for the new senate have been scheduled for the third Wednesday of each month.

**"I'm interested in the decision-making process and what is going on at that level."**

**Andrew McDonald**  
Biology professor

# SHEPARD continued from Page 1

crime punishments more strict, and fought for equal rights in marriage and adoption for same-sex couples. And Tuesday, she had some advice for the audience.

"For all those who ask what they can do for Matt and other victims of hate crime, my answer is this: educate, educate (and) educate," she stressed.

The Matthew Shepard Act, named after Shepard's son, would give authority to prosecute crimes committed out of hate. The bill passed in the senate Sept. 27, 2007, but was later dropped when former President George Bush expressed that he would veto the bill.

A 1994 federal law on hate crimes defines them as crimes directed toward a person with a perceived or actual race, gender, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, or religion. However crimes committed because of a person's gender identity or sexual orientation do not have an extra sentencing penalty.

In 2007 law enforcement agencies reported 1,460 hate crimes based on sexual orientation bias. In 2000, 40 states had hate crime laws.

# SGA continued from Page 1

dent of the student body, said that the landslide vote concerning the gun idea shows something about the students of UTPA.

"Students wouldn't feel safe or comfortable coming to class where the guy next to you could be wearing a gun on his waist," he said.

On the issue of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board's proposal to change the TEXAS Grant from need-based to merit-based status, the tally was a little closer, and

Shepard expressed her dismay with the previous administration and what she called its discouragement of LGBT rights.

"Our (former) president was vocally opposed to the gay community... I can't tell you how terrible I felt when he went on TV and said that basically the gay community was second class," she said.

Shepard stressed that though the passing of hate crimes legislation seemed hopeful with President Barack Obama's support and a new legislative session, there are still parts of the issue that are not fully supported, such as the addition of transgender individuals to the Employment Non-discrimination Act, a bill passed on Sept. 2007 that excluded transgender people from receiving equal employment opportunities.

"I'm pretty sure this administration is going to advance all our policy changes but we have to make sure transgender is kept in there this time (in hate crime legislation)," Shepard noted. "There's a level of fear and misunderstanding on transgender but we just

need to talk."

With that, she urged the crowd to organize and ask their legislators to support LGBT and hate crime legislation.

"It's all about the volume," said Shepard. "They work at your invitation, they owe you an explanation for the things we don't get."

Though Shepard said a more accepting administration was a big step for the LGBT community, some things are tougher to legislate, such as a feeling of acceptance in society.

"Perhaps it wouldn't be so easy to discourage if the world saw how many of us there really were," she said, adding that admission is not easy. "That's the hardest part isn't it? Being true to yourself, being true to the ones you love."

Van Reidhead, dean of the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences and DSS chair, mentioned that the Speakers committee is currently deciding on its next round of guests. Students that want to join the committee are encouraged to stop by the Office of Student Development for more information.

The last piece of legislation students were asked to express their opinion on is the denial of illegal immigrant students the right to enter into a Texas public higher education institution.

On that measure, students voted it down by three to one. About 995 students voted in opposition to the bill, while 340 supported it.

The results of the referendums will be sent to the state capitol for legislators and the UT System to review.

## WENKER continued from Page 3

to be brave enough to close up things if they do not work," Wenker said.

According to the university's Web site, the entrepreneurship speaker series was launched in January 2008, to increase the quantity as well as quality of entrepreneurship education on the campus as well as the community.

Sargent said he hopes to expand the series to include all six colleges and other departments at UTPA.

"The Entrepreneurship Cluster is a group committed to fostering entrepreneurship and innovation in South Texas," Sargent said. "By bringing together engineering students and faculty developing new technology products and best practices for commercialization with business school students able to create viable business

plans, we create an avenue for successful new ventures."

There is no one department responsible for the series, rather it is an "entrepreneurship cluster," comprised of faculty from the Colleges of Business Administration, College of Science and Engineering, and from the Office of the Vice Provost for Research. r

Sargent believes that since entrepreneurship is a very broad field, it can apply to students in studies ranging from business to arts

and humanities. The series tries to diversify its audience and picks different interests in entrepreneurship.

"You cannot be afraid and you have to be brave enough to close up things if they do not work, or continue to grow it if it does work."

**Olivier Wenker**  
Entrepreneurship speaker

lawyers (to work to get patents), and marketers (to work to commercialize the product or business.)"

## RETENTION continued from Page 3

Thelma Leal, research analyst in Undergraduate Studies, said required course UNIV 1301 was a huge factor in increasing freshman retention.

UNIV 1301, which began in 2004, helps students gain better study habits, and become more familiar with the university and life as a student while in college.

This class was initiated by the URAP center to improve student retention.

"Once I took UNIV 1301, my study habits did improve and so did my social skills with other peers in my class. I learned that study sessions were great for studying," Gutierrez said. "The study sessions have really helped me out."

Another factor that has contributed in large part to student retention at UTPA has been the Early Warning System. In this case, professors are encouraged to provide information if students are doing poorly in their classes.

"These letters are mailed to the student's home without notice, and it seems to have helped students get back on track," Lopez said.

### DID YOU KNOW?

**Enrollment at UTPA in Fall 2008 was 17,330, of which 2,590 were freshmen. This makes it the largest batch of freshmen in UTPA history.**

## FARMWORKER continued from Page 3

Cesar Chavez day a national holiday, and a Cesar Chavez blood drive for students wishing to donate blood.

The highlight of the week was when Cosecha Voices and the English department brought in nationally recognized poet Garcia, author of "When Life Was Living in a Labor Camp," published in 2000.

Garcia believes that the problems she experienced as a migrant child

have not abated, and she intends on raising awareness on the issues that persist.

"The problems I hoped would disappear haven't," she said. "The lack of oversight over poor farming practices, and its damaging effects on migrant communities displays a critical issue in America."

Garcia is an advocate of service learning programs, and teaches ser-

vice learning classes at her own University.

Her visit to UTPA was geared not only to spread the awareness of ongoing migrant issues, but also to spread the benefits of service learning.

Garcia also gave a poetry reading Thursday from her book, which described her life as a child in a Mexican farm-worker community.

Student Lauren Espinoza thought Farmworker Awareness Week was good for the community.

"Most people don't give a lot of thought to migrant farmworkers, people think these issues ended in

the '70s." said the 23-year old English major from McAllen. "The reading that Garcia gave was happier than some people thought it would be, she spoke about her childhood and some of the better parts of it, it was inspiring hearing about her childhood in the reading."

Emmy Perez, an associate professor in the English department, helped sponsor the reading and events and understands the topics ongoing relevance.

"Migrant issues still exist and we want students at UTPA to be inspired to try service learning programs,"

she said, "Role models such as Diana Garcia show students they can succeed even if they have lived a less fortunate past, and also help others in society who need our attention."

### DID YOU KNOW?

In the U.S., farm work is the third most dangerous job and farmworkers who plant and harvest vegetation do not have many of the worker protections that other jobs do.



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The allure of a fast car speeding down the road at 90 mph or more is something at all people feel one time in their lives. The roar of the wind, the purr of the motor as the engine works those horses to pull top RPMs. While doing this on the streets of any city will land you a ticket, this is exactly what the racers in NASCAR do and what the fans come to watch, whether it be at the race track or at home to host a viewing show.

What exactly is a view show for NASCAR?

In the words of senior marketing major Deanna Schneyer, "The minimum requirements for a NASCAR viewing party would be just showing the race. Kind of like how you would have Super Bowl parties, you would have a NASCAR race viewing party."

Schneyer is the team leader for the University of Texas-Pan American NASCAR team, which put together the viewing party as part of a nationwide competitive internship. The internship started at the beginning of the semester and consisted of a series of case studies and a viewing show. The five-member team of business and

marketing majors is competing against teams from Winston-Salem State University, Central Michigan University and Howard University. And Sunday's event marked the end of the competition.

The show had an offering of plenty of activities to do and see. For the young ones, a moonwalk and tricycles to ride. There was a Playstation 3 set up with NASCAR '09 available to play, with the actual Samsung 500 NASCAR race playing on the big screen. The WRSC had a number of activities, allowing visitors a try at the rock wall or a dip in the pool. Outside with the car show, there was a dunking booth and live local bands such as Twentynine, Decadent Suits, and Ram Danesse playing on the main stage throughout the show.

Along with the variety of activities, drawings were held throughout the event for a number of prizes ranging from free T-shirts to gas cards and Olive Garden gift cards. The prizes were sponsored by local businesses, and plaques also were awarded for the winners of the car show.

The viewing party was the major part of the

competition, so the team went for broke.

"We wanted to do something big, we needed something to get people here," Schneyer said. "So we thought, why not do a huge car show. They are not NASCARs but they are cars."

The former volleyball Lady Bronc added that the team was looking to combine venue with demographics.

"We needed people who are involved in the car community to come out and support," she said. "We wanted to do it in a place that would have a lot to do. So we made sure we could have the rock wall, we knew we had the projection equipment capabilities in here to have that big screen."

#### CAMPUS STAR

This was not the only thing on Schneyer's plate however. She is participating in various other organizations like the Forum on International Relations and Business Affairs (FIRBA), and Free Hugs, after four years as a middle blocker in volleyball. And with all this, schoolwork had to be done but this did not pose a problem for the veteran student-athlete; she proved herself in



Story by: Gregorio Garza

the fall by earning a spot on the Great West All-Academic Team.

“Being an athlete, it’s very similar,” said the senior from Diamond Bar, Cali., about the addition of the NASCAR gig to her busy schedule. “It’s not impossible, it’s one of those things that you make time for. I have team members, they also have demands: they have school, they have 40 hours a week, they have jobs. So making time has been really difficult.”

The competition started January 18 when a professor from the College of Business coming to give a presentation, telling students that the racing organization was putting on the program, NASCAR Kinetics, Marketing in Motion. NASCAR offered an internship that would count for academic credit and provide real-world experience for those involved.

The five competing schools have already finished the academic part of the internship, which deals with weekly case studies. These case studies were open-ended assignments from NASCAR to get the foundation’s name out at UTPA. One such case study consisted of ideas on how NASCAR

could go green, and the teams could do whatever they wanted to try and fulfill the requirements of the case study. Deciding to use neither Powerpoint nor Word, the UTPA team went all out and made a commercial with fictitious Web sites to try and get a competitive edge. Now they are trying to see which school can get the biggest crowd out a party. In about two weeks, the results will be in, and Schneyer has high hopes that they will win saying, “I’m pretty confident that we are because we have put on an incredible show.”

Other student organizations such as Bronc Athletics, Wellness Recreation Association and FIRBA were asked to volunteer to help out with the party by setting up booths for fundraising.

Putting on the show has given all of the NASCAR Kinetics team members an opportunity to be involved in advertising, promotion, marketing, and PR work.

“These are all things we take classes about, but we never really put them into practice and host an event for something this big,” Schneyer said.

While the stress of putting on such a huge event can overwhelm some, it has only stood as

a confirmation to the volleyball player that she belongs in marketing.

“OK, you want to do marketing,” Schneyer said she’s told herself. “Yes, this is for you. You’re in the right field. You didn’t make a mistake. This is something you’re gonna love.”

In the final analysis, the team was slightly disappointed at the turnout, around 200 people showed up. But the folks who did come seemed to enjoy the car show and all the other events. A number of presentations by NASCAR also captured attention and Schneyer herself admitted that, “I did my job. I’m a happy girl.”

The NASCAR internship will be offered once again next semester and while she will be graduating in December, Schneyer is unsure whether she’ll do it again. Besides having a full plate next semester, she would like to give somebody else the opportunity to be a part of the program and experience it for themselves.

“It’s bittersweet. Like wow, it has been a really good experience but I don’t know if I really want to do it again. But I don’t know, I haven’t really decided what I’m gonna do yet,” Schneyer said.

Photos by: Ben Briones Design by: Roy Bazan



**CAMPUS LIFE** Education Beyond Your Degree

EVENTS

Thur., Apr. 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Air Hockey Tournament <i>Starting at 3:30p.m. in the SU Game Room</i></li> <li>Bronc Baseball vs. UTB <i>Starting at 6:30p.m. at the Edinburg Baseball Stadium</i></li> </ul>
Fri., Apr. 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Good Friday - No Classes</li> <li>Bronc Baseball vs. UTB <i>Starting at 6:30p.m. at the Edinburg Baseball Stadium</i></li> </ul>
Sat., Apr. 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bronc Baseball vs. UTB <i>Starting at 12:00p.m. at the Edinburg Baseball Stadium</i></li> </ul>
Tue., Apr. 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Game Lounge Tournament <i>Starting at 3:00p.m. at the SU Game Room</i></li> <li>Guitar Hero World Tour Tournament <i>Starting at 3:00p.m. at the SU Game Room</i></li> <li>Leadership Week Kick off Event: "Respond-Ability, Don't Let Life Live You" by Troy Stende <i>Starting at 5:30p.m. at the SU Theater</i></li> </ul>
Wed., Apr. 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Game Room "Happy Hour" <i>From 3:00p.m. to 5:00p.m. at the SU Game Room</i></li> <li>A Night in Poetry: Gabriela G. Medina <i>From 7:00p.m. to 9:00p.m. at the SU Theater</i></li> </ul>
Thurs., Apr. 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student Employment Job Fair <i>From 10:00a.m. to 12:00p.m. at the Ballroom</i></li> <li>Leadership Week: Salute to Student Leaders Luncheon <i>From 12:00p.m. 1:00p.m. at the Ballroom</i></li> <li>WRSC Derby-All-Around Sports Competition <i>From 4:30p.m. to 7:30p.m. at the WRSC</i></li> </ul>



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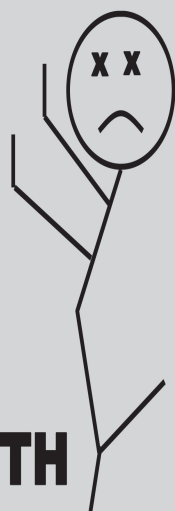
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Las Palmas Race Park

April 8, 2009

THE PAN AMERICAN

Page 11

### STUDENT LIFE

# Family weekend gathers students, families for fun

Victor Ituarte  
THE PAN AMERICAN

The blazing Saturday sun beat down on children's heads and faces, but that didn't keep them from partaking in the activities at Family Weekend at The University of Texas-Pan American's Wellness and Recreational Sports Complex.

The event, hosted by the Office of Student Life and Transition Services, offered UTPA students and their siblings or children various distractions like a Vello obstacle course, an open pool, and a moon jump. Student organizations were also present offering their own amenities.

Music major Courtney Villarreal of McAllen took her 3-year-old son to enjoy the function.

"It was awesome, the kids have enough candy to last them the year," joked the 22-year-old senior.

Villarreal said Family Weekend was a lifesaver during hard economic times when she can't afford to take her son out everywhere.

"As college students, we still fit that description of eating Ramen and stuff except we have kids to take care of too," she explained. "It was something fun that they could do that wasn't expensive for us at all."

Rushing around behind the scenes was Jodie Moore, program coordinator for the SLTS Office.

"As soon as we got back in for the spring semester, we started planning Family Weekend," Moore said.

She added that their goal was for students' family members to leave with a sense of the university and where their parents, siblings, or cousins go when they are not at home.

"It's a day for families to come together and have a good time and spend quality time with each other, but also have it at the university," she explained. "A lot of times family members are busy or are not able to take time away and actually see what we have to offer here at UTPA like the rec center."

Victoria Gomez, a 20-year-old rehab major, volunteered with the Student Leadership Program at Family Weekend and helped serve food. She felt that Family Weekend could have an impact on youngsters.

"It gives them something to look forward to, something to be like, 'Oh, I want to be like my brother and sister, I want to go to college,'" Gomez said. "It gets them excited."

Gomez recounted her childhood memories of walking around and looking

at the campus and how it affected her.

"It was when I was in elementary. We would always wait out there with my dad for my mom to get out," she reminisced.

She felt that exposure to the campus at a young age influenced her decision to

attend UTPA.

"It's the fact that I walked around here and saw the old buildings," she explained. "What really attracted me to the school was that it's big and it's really close-knit."

Attending Family Weekend could

possibly have the same effect on Villarreal's son one day, but for now, she is content with keeping him entertained.

"The day was perfect and I think it's really great what Pan Am does to help out the students that have kids," she said.



Ben Briones/THE PAN AMERICAN

**FUN IN THE SUN** - Ammie Ortiz (left) and Erica Rodriguez, both biology majors, sit by the pool with their children while enjoying Family Weekend on Saturday afternoon.

### COMMUNITY

# Poets, organization hope to fight AIDS epidemic with words

By Russen Vela  
THE PAN AMERICAN

Valley International Poetry Festival, known as VIPF, is something everyone should experience. Sure one could complain that poetry really isn't her thing, or even worse that she doesn't know what the hell poetry is. But people will learn quickly if they go to the event, in its second year of showcasing Valley artists.

The other goal of the festival is to help end AIDS. With the help of Valley poet/English teacher Daniel Garcia Ordaz, the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual festival will be held April 23 through April 26, to promote art and poetry and mix in social responsibility.

Garcia Ordaz, Houston born and Mission raised, now lives in McAllen and has been a teacher of freshmen at McAllen Memorial High for three years. He reflected on his past, about being fascinated by poetry, how he got published, and most of all, his involvement with the upcoming poetry festival.

"Before I started teaching at the high school I was a newspaper reporter at The Pan American, where I became the managing editor," Garcia said. "After that stint I worked teaching English and GED classes to adults who were laid off local

by factories before working at the *Valley Morning Star* in Harlingen covering news and later features."

Garcia, who likes to use his mother's maiden name (Ordaz) for poetry and art works, explained that poetry found him, rather than vice versa.

"I learned to read first in Spanish from the King James Version of The Bible, from my mom and grandma," Garcia said. "They would make me memorize the Psalms, which are poems."

Garcia also explained that poetry has always been a part of his life, whether he heard it in church hymns or read it early on with Dr. Seuss and Langston Hughes in school.

"I didn't look at myself as a poet until people started calling me that," he added. "Poetry found me, though, I tried breaking up with her and I've strayed many times. But I love poetry. Poetry is sexy, succinct, succulent, and fun."

Garcia stated that he became a micro-publisher in 2004, cranking out his own collection of poetry, first as a chapbook then, in 2006, as a full collection. Chapbook is a term currently used to denote low-cost hard-copy books, particularly of poetry. Poetry chapbooks tend to focus on a specific theme, story, or form to

unify the entire book.

Although he has been published in journals, he is also a self-published poet.

"You don't get rich from poetry," he said humorously. "So I wanted to control my own work."

With an impressive bio of how he came to be, Garcia insisted on talking about the poetry festival, which he seemed excited about.

The festival is a program from Art That Heals, Inc., a nonprofit organization that Garcia started with two other fellow UTPA students in 2002. The group's mission is to encourage cultural literacy in the Rio Grande Valley by promoting the arts, and to use art to end the AIDS epidemic. The organization serves the people of the Rio Grande Valley and deep South Texas, namely in Starr, Hidalgo, Cameron, Willacy and Zapata counties, by encouraging an appreciation for the arts and cultural awareness.

The event is the culmination of National Poetry Month and fits perfectly with the group's goals of local promotion.

"We got tired of traveling to other festivals upstate just to read once," Garcia admitted. "So instead of complaining we started our own thing - and made it better."

The festival, which Garcia likes to call Poetry Pachanga, started in April 2008 and was a hit with audience attendees, which made Garcia realize it was time to have another one.

"The first poetry festival was held at UTPA and we had lots of folks in and out within the four-hour event," he recalled. "The first VIPF in 2008 garnered some media attention, but not as much as hoped; nevertheless, we inaugurated a new cultural event in the Valley with several venues with standing-room-only crowds."

Garcia also mentioned that 2008 headliner Amalia Ortiz, a La Feria native who remains the only Valleyite to appear multiple times on HBO's Def Poetry Jam, had such a blast last year that she's hoping to return this year.

The events start Thursday, April 23 at the McAllen Chamber of Commerce from 7 to 9 p.m. And the next day, several poets will visit high schools for readings as part of Poets in the Schools Program. Other highlights include a Youth Poetry Slam for high school kids on Friday night at the South Texas College Cooper Center (Pecan Campus) from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. After the Poetry Slam for high school kids is finished, the grand finale from 9:30 p.m. on will

be the Poetry Slam for registered poets. As Garcia pointed out, the last event is "a fun popularity contest."

Kristina Ruiz, a sophomore rehab major learned of the event from her friends.

"I sometimes write poetry, but just for fun," Ruiz said. "My friends told me about the festival and wanted me to fill out a registration form, but since I am still not comfortable speaking in public, I'd rather just attend a workshop."

Poets have to pay to attend, but all readings and workshops are open to the public free of charge. Registration started officially in January and late registration continues through April 11. The fee for the poets is \$30 which covers registration, and includes one guaranteed reading of his or her poetry, and entry to workshops and other readings.

For those interested can download a copy of the registration form off the VIPF Website [www.vipf.org](http://www.vipf.org).

"It's important that the community come and listen and fill up the venues," Garcia said. "The festival belongs to the Valley. As long as the Valley supports it, we plan to keep meeting the last week-end of April for the next thousand years to celebrate poetry."

## CAMPUS

# UTPA dancers incorporate new skills for ensemble

By Kristen Cabrera  
THE PAN AMERICAN

The old adage says practice makes perfect, and perfection is what the UTPA Dance Ensemble is striving for.

Back in January a group of dancers were given the opportunity to work closely with a guest choreographer and in two weeks, they along with the rest of the ensemble who will perform pieces choreographed by professors Dana Shackelford and Melinda Blomquist, will show off their new-found skills and determination and perseverance should be evident in their movements. The performance is slated for April 16 through April 18 at 7:30 each night in the Fine Arts Auditorium.

Sarah Almaraz, 21-year-old dance major from Edinburg, sat in a semi-circle on the dance floor with the other five members of the modern dance group, after a run-through of the performance. They had met in January before school had started in order to learn from guest choreographer Lynn Marie Ruse, who worked with them on a 20-minute piece based on a ballet composed by Igor Stravinsky of the comical 18<sup>th</sup> century Italian character, Pulcenella, who was somewhat a clown.

Her choreography portrays the character as goofy and playing pranks, as well as very fluid, and in dance-oriented movements.

"It's just, we can't roll!" Almaraz dramatically exclaimed as she recalled the frustration and aggravation she along with other members of the Dance Ensemble felt back in early January.

In the beginning of the piece the girls must roll on the floor back and forth in unison with different movements, while still staying synchronized.

There are deep, operatic voices toward the end of the segment to which 19-year-old sophomore Priscilla Gomez mouths "Watermelon, Cantaloupe" to the Italian singing.

The dance major and Harlingen native must pretend she is singing in the piece and since she doesn't know the actual Italian words, one of the girls gave an old stage trick; to mouth the two fruit names in order to make it more realistic. Though seemingly easy, the girls explained how hard this part of the piece was to get down.

"The first day we tried it and she (Ruse) thought that was going to be the easiest thing. But it took us the whole time just to do eight counts," Almaraz said.

"It ended up being, 'OK, who gets up? Which way are we going? What? I don't know,'" described Gomez gesturing grandly to illustrate the confusion.

"And it was the third day," Almaraz said. "And we tried it for a good section and by that time it was a laughing frustration. I'll say it like that because no one was upset. And that's when I was like, 'It's



Ben Briones/THE PAN AMERICAN

**CATCH ME** - Sophomore dance major Erin Aguillon goes through a routine taught by guest choreographer Lynn Marie Ruse.

just, It's just...It's just...we can't roll!" she exclaimed amid bouts of laughter.

As the laughter and reminiscing subsided, the mood became a little more serious, as the girls talked about how the week affected the troop's friendship, about which Almaraz commented.

"We just became a family."

SMACK! came the sound of a tablet landing on the floor that Gomez threw in front of Almaraz.

"Priscilla!" the girls said through giggles.

"Hey, you're ruining the moment. Whatever, I'm not close to you anymore," Almaraz joked.

"I've seen your tears! Splattered against your glasses!" Gomez countered.

The girls were still carrying on the exaggerated humor of the piece into fun, joking conversation. It's obvious that the time spent has brought them closer than normal classmates and company members. Among this shared camaraderie comes the shared experience of working with Ruse.

Senior dance major Adina Flores added her thoughts regarding the guest artist.

"You never know what to expect with guest artists," said the 32-year-old from Mercedes. "I think I underestimated (the piece) when we first saw the video."

At that moment most of the girls exclaimed in agreement and chimed in.

"There's more of a theatrical feel. It's just different than what we were used to. Even though I've been through several guest artists," Flores noted exasperatedly. "It's still having to draw upon lots of other performance qualities with this kind of a piece. You have to work things which dancing does just not cover. You really have to be a performer."

The comedic and theatrical piece has the dancers tapping into both their performing theatrical skills as well as dance technique, in order to pull it off. The performance has theatrical, exaggerated fun qualities with strong and very vocally oriented classical music to which some of the girls again orally pantomime, 'Watermelon, Cantaloupe'



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TRACK AND FIELD

# J.J. Hernandez brings home gold from Texas Relays

By Ramiro Paez  
THE PAN AMERICAN

When senior J.J. Hernandez finished the 3,000-meter steeplechase at the 82nd-annual Texas Relays in Austin last Friday, the exhaustion from the race turned bittersweet.

The race's physical and mental demand earned Hernandez a first-place finish in the nation's second largest track meet behind the Penn Relays, but capturing the top spot wasn't his only goal. Hernandez, who clocked in at 9:09.48, finished just two seconds behind the regional qualifying mark that would have sent him to the NCAA Regional Championships next month for the second consecutive year.

Despite that, the San Juan native says triumphing on a grand stage was a feat unlike any other he's experienced during his running career at The University of Texas-Pan American.

"It was a dream come true," said Hernandez, who is also a member of the 2008 Great West Conference men's championship cross-country team. "I've been trying to win a race there since high school. Trying to compete and always coming up short,

and just somehow having bad races the day of...to finally win one, coming from a small school, it felt good."

Hernandez is certainly no stranger to the strenuous event. Last season, he secured five top-10 finishes, including placing first at the Texas State Open, and Javelina and Houston Invitationals. However, it was his second-place finish at the Texas Twilight that clinched a spot at the Regional Championships in Lincoln, Neb., after crossing the finish line at 9:00.87.

"It was cool," Hernandez said when asked about being the lone male representative from UTPA at the regional meet last year. "I feel like I represented the team, the distance runners especially. When I went to regionals, I felt that they were all there. It made me feel proud."

The local first took notice of the steeplechase when he traveled to a national track meet in California during his senior year at PSJA North High School, where he was a two-time Most Valuable Player in cross country. The NCAA Outdoor Championships were taking place within the same proximity so he decided to shadow a collegiate track setting.

He closely observed the event's demands and after a trial test during his freshman season with the Broncs, he continued to participate in it.

The program will resume competition Saturday in El Paso for the UTEP Invitational, where Hernandez will not run the steeplechase in an effort to recover from the Austin race. On April 18, the teams will travel to Austin for the UT Twilight and Hernandez hopes he can generate the same results from the meet that gave him his first taste of regional competition.

"Hopefully, I'll have that magic from the track," he said. "My goal from the beginning of the year was to qualify for the NCAA Outdoor (Championships). It's still my goal; it hasn't changed whether I qualify automatically, with the time, or with the conference championship."

### A QUICK CHASE

Hernandez best describes the steeplechase as a combination between a cross-country and horse race. The race, which is 7.2 laps on a 400-meter track, consists of five barriers, or extensive hurdles, including one water jump. The jump contains a barrier fol-

lowed by a pit of water, which is 12 feet long and is 27.6 inches deep, sloping upward from the end of the barrier. For the runner, the greater the jump, the more shallow the landing.

"It's tough," Hernandez said. "You have to jump things, jump over water. You have to run fast. I think it's really the hardest thing I've ever done."

The number of laps can also vary depending if the water jump is placed on the inside of lane one or to the outside of lanes eight and nine. If placed inside, the number of laps is greater than 7.2. The runner faces a barrier after every 100 meters.

Being an avid cross-country runner has definitely helped Hernandez excel. His training regimen consists of a 10- or 11-mile run followed by practice jumping over hurdles, plus working on form and flexibility. Since the steeplechase is a distance race, it is better to pace oneself and gradually build speed the last two to three laps, he says.

Hernandez admits many people like the concept of the event, but has some considerable advice for those think they can go toe-to-toe with the chase.

"You just got to be tough," he said. "It's not for everybody."

### TEXAS RELAYS RESULTS

Women's shot put:		
14th place Amanda Ferris	13.58m	44-06.75
Women's discus:		
6th place Stephanie Perez	46.76m	153-05
Women's hammer throw:		
12th place Ferris	52.90m	173-07
Men's 4x800 meter run:		
6th place UT-Pan American		7:43.86
	1) Omar Doria	
	2) Gilroy Martinez	
	3) Andrew Lopez	
	4) Wally Gonzales	
Men's 4x1,500 meter run:		
8th place UT-Pan American		16:45.12
	1) Omar Doria	
	2) Wally Gonzalez	
	3) Gilroy Martinez	
	4) Andrew Lopez	
Men's 3,000 steeplechase:		
1st place J.J. Hernandez		9:09.48

WOMEN'S TENNIS

# Lady Broncs score second win, defeating Stephen F. Austin 4-2

By Pedro Perez IV  
THE PAN AMERICAN

Home can be a wonderful thing for people who have been away from it for so long. Last week the Lady Broncs hosted their first match in almost two months, handing a 4-2 defeat to the Lady Jacks of Stephen F. Austin University Friday.

Texas A&M-Corpus Christi was supposed to be on the marquee for Saturday but a conference match between it and Sam Houston State kept the Islanders from showing up to the match with UTPA.

"We played one tennis match this weekend and Corpus (Christi A&M) had to cancel because they had something come up with their schedule as well, they're in a conference and they needed to take care of something," interim head coach Chris Gill said.

Gill felt the Lady Broncs are progressing as individual players and are improving each time they take the court.

"Their season has been about growing and getting a little bit better each time and trying to compete at a much higher level than the individual players are used to and at times it's been rough," he admitted.

It only took three singles matches

to seal the deal against the Lady Jacks. In the second flight, junior Luisa Cantu handed Sanjana Kapur a 6-1, 6-1 defeat while team captain Megan Bedeau featured her A game in the fourth spot and made an easy 6-0, 6-2 win against Andreea Enica. In the final spot of singles play the Finnish freshman Reetta Raty defeated Mary Harrison 6-4, 6-0.

For doubles competition veterans Cantu and Bedeau defeated Jamie Williams and Mary Harrison 8-2 while the pairing of newcomers Andrea Salveto and Malin Anderson pinned an 8-6 defeat on Gabriela Gadeva and Kapur.

"It wasn't even close," Gill said. "As far as our match I was really excited to see the girls play so well and I was really proud of them. It's been a really rough season and any time we can get a win on the court, I'm happy."

For the Lady Broncs this marks only the second victory of the season unlike last year where they set the single season record in the win column with a 16-8 mark.

The Lady Broncs close out the season April 17, as they host the National Independent Tournament at the Orville Cox Center.

On the marquee for the tournament are Longwood University, Seattle University, New Jersey Institute of Technology, and Chicago State University.



Hector J. Garcia/THE PAN AMERICAN

**ELASTIC COLLISION** - Team captain Megan Bedeau dashes across the line, saving the ball with a forehand as the ball. She went on to win her matches last Thursday at the Orville Cox Tennis Center.



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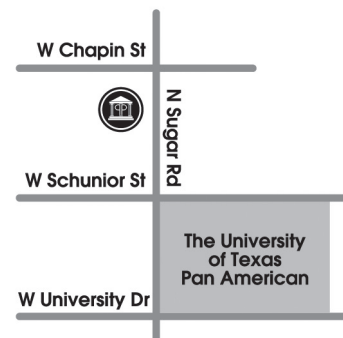


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BASEBALL

# Broncs look to finish off season, start building up for 2010

By Ramiro Paez  
THE PAN AMERICAN

Sitting on the far right side of Bronco baseball coach Manny Mantrana's desk are two books he says are essential to his being, not to mention team morale. He admits he owns a large book collection, but it's "The Coach's Bible" and "The Student Bible" which teach him how to improve his overall demeanor and teach his team far greater lessons than baseball; a recipe steered toward assertiveness.

"Without that, there's nothing," Mantrana said when asked why those books are at the forefront of his desk. "Those are the two biggest books that I have as far as me as a person, me as coach, husband, and father. Everything is about that and we try to tell the boys that.

"They have to have a belief and have to have faith in something because we would want them to have their priorities in order. And those priorities being God first, family second, school third and then baseball comes at the bottom in either fourth or fifth."

Other noticeable items are two game balls in small, clear-cubed cases. The first is a from Mantrana's victory against Auburn University-Montgomery that earned his St. Thomas University team's first trip to the College World Series, in 1998. He led the Saints to nine postseason appearances before accepting the head coaching position at UTPA.

But in front of the STU case, and at the head of the desk, is a ball used in Mantrana's first victory at UTPA after the Broncs defeated Texas A&M Corpus Christi 9-3 back on March 8. The location of the UTPA game ball might be done out of sheer coincidence, but it is definitely a bright spot in Mantrana's first season, as it has been a rough one.

The Broncs fell to 5-27 on the season after being swept in a three-game set against the University of Houston last

SEASON STATS													
(As of April 7, 2009)													
BATTING													
Player	avg	gp-gs	ab	r	h	2b	3b	hr	rbi	tb	slg%	bb	so
Garcia, Abraham	.347	27-27	95	16	33	5	1	3	13	49	.516	7	19
Hernandez, Iradier	.328	22-16	64	11	21	2	0	0	2	23	.359	5	4
Mendoza, Jose	.325	32-32	114	21	37	4	0	0	10	41	.360	16	12
Perez, Andrew	.307	24-24	88	9	27	8	0	0	17	35	.398	7	11
Hough, Bonham	.284	27-27	102	17	29	7	0	2	15	42	.412	13	9
Donaho, Billy	.267	14-14	45	4	12	1	0	0	1	13	.289	4	13
Bivone, Garrett	.262	28-28	103	14	27	4	0	3	20	40	.388	18	21
Rutenbar, Jordan	.254	32-32	118	14	30	5	0	2	19	41	.347	7	18
Spears, Nick	.227	26-26	88	10	20	2	0	0	10	22	.250	8	15
Vest, Ryan	.221	31-31	104	10	23	6	0	1	15	32	.308	7	16
Salinas, Gabriel	.214	10-4	14	3	3	0	0	0	1	3	.214	3	4
Salmon, Jose	.211	17-8	38	6	8	1	0	1	5	12	.316	2	7
Garza, Esequiel	.182	18-7	33	5	6	2	0	0	6	8	.242	4	11
Tefft, Tim	.136	20-14	44	7	6	1	0	1	4	10	.227	3	14
Tovar, Thomas	.077	9-0	13	1	1	1	0	0	0	2	.154	0	3
<b>Totals</b>	<b>.266</b>	<b>32-32</b>	<b>1063</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>283</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>373</b>	<b>.351</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>177</b>
Opponents	.339	32-32	1122	306	380	91	18	28	283	591	.527	184	155

PITCHING													
Player	era	w-l	app-gs	cg	sho	sv	ip	h	r	er	bb	so	
Franco, A.J.	4.50	0-0	3-0	0	0/0	0	6.0	8	3	3	1	3	
Martinez, Marcos	6.32	1-0	10-0	0	0/0	0	15.2	17	13	11	10	11	
Wingo, Scott	6.70	1-4	8-7	1	0/0	0	43.0	53	37	32	21	31	
Lankford, Mike	7.08	1-3	13-3	0	0/0	0	34.1	61	32	27	8	14	
Molina, Nathan	9.46	1-4	11-4	0	0/0	0	32.1	43	39	34	12	15	
Roth, Doug	9.55	0-3	9-6	0	0/0	1	21.2	31	27	23	24	6	
Janecka, Shane	9.66	1-1	11-3	0	0/0	0	31.2	49	36	34	19	20	
De Leon, David	9.66	0-5	12-4	0	0/0	0	31.2	44	40	34	24	22	
Brevard, Seth	10.05	0-1	11-0	0	0/0	0	14.1	20	24	16	14	8	
Tefft, Tim	10.89	0-3	6-2	0	0/0	0	19.0	28	23	23	16	11	
Garcia, Anthony	12.13	0-3	11-3	0	0/0	0	23.0	26	32	31	35	14	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>8.85</b>	<b>5-27</b>	<b>32-32</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0/0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>272.2</b>	<b>380</b>	<b>306</b>	<b>268</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>155</b>	
Opponents	3.96	27-5	32-32	4	3/2	5	282.0	283	148	124	104	177	

weekend, but Mantrana, with the helping hand of his literary guides, says he continuously reminds his team that there will always be hardships that present themselves, just like in any life situation.

Mantrana has never experienced a season such as this one during his coaching career, with a career record of 439-200-1, but he boldly states that 2009's arduous journey has come as no surprise.

"We expected this to be a long season because everything starts and ends with recruiting, and when you have eight straight losing seasons the No. 1 reason for that becomes recruiting or the lack of," he said. "We were ready for it. It was something that I took the job knowing."

The struggle continues to come from the mound as the team's 11 pitchers have combined for an 8.85 ERA, while op-

ponents pitch at a 3.96 clip. Couple that with the loss of centerfielder Billy Donaho, who still ranks in the top half of the team's batting average in only 14 games played, and the Broncs have been left scrambling to establish any momentum.

So where does the team go from here with only 19 games remaining before the National Independent Tournament May 20?

"We're going to continue to work, try to continue to improve each player and try to be the best team we can become for this year," Mantrana said. "Nothing changes."

The Broncs open a four-game homestand today with a matchup against The University of Texas-Brownsville at 6 p.m. UTPA will host TCU for a three-game series beginning tomorrow at 6:30 p.m.

GOLF

# Women practice hard, seek to bounce back after last week's performance

By Kevin Stich  
THE PAN AMERICAN

With the searing sun and gusting winds bearing down on them, Bronco golfers wear the sweat, oil and dirt from strenuous practice rounds and workouts as badges of honor while the days hastily inch toward the Great West Conference Championships April 20-21.

As the tournament closes in, every day for the University of Texas-Pan American men's and women's golf teams is a grind.

Last week, the women's team had its poorest showing all year as it finished 17th out of 21 teams at the UALR Women's Golf Classic in Hot Springs, Ark. However, head coach Ofelia Lopez remains optimistic and declared that the squad is ready to bounce back at the conference event, in Houston at Sienna Plantation Golf Club.

"The team is actually very excited. They've been working hard," Lopez said. "The girls just came off their worst tournament of the season. Are they mad? Are they ready to get back? Are they ready to end the season good? Yeah."

"As a coach you never want to say that you're glad that they played bad, but it's an advantage because they hated it. They don't like how they played, they don't like how they placed."

Lopez attributed the team's poor performance partially to wet and windy conditions and partially to the lack of desire to contend.

The Lady Broncs have just over two weeks until the conference championships and are using this time to simulate pressure situations that they may face at the tournament. The team has spent time practicing at the McAllen Country Club, where Lopez settles for nothing but pars.

**Ofelia Lopez**  
Women's head golf coach

"It's kind of letting them know that you can par 18 holes on the golf course, but do you have the courage to do it? Do you have that killer instinct that says that I'm not going to make a bogey?"

According to both Lopez and men's head coach Santiago De Larrea, the men's team looks as impressive as it has all season after a disappointing showing at SFA Bill Hill Classic in February where the Broncs finished fifth out of five teams. After a two-month layoff the Broncs will head to Jonesboro, Ark., for the Red Wolf Classic April 13-14 and will use it as a primer for the conference event.

"If they didn't par the first hole they had to go all the way back to the tee box and play it again. Once they parred number one, they could go to number two. If they didn't par number two they had to come back," she said. "It's kind of just letting

them know that you can par 18 holes on the golf course, but do you have the courage to do it? Do you have the will? Do you have that killer instinct that says that I'm not going to make a bogey?"

"I wish we had a tournament this week because we are as prepared as we have ever been for the whole season," De Larrea said. "The guys are looking pretty good, everybody is playing great and I have very high expectations for this tournament..."

We should do fine and be in pretty good shape for conference the week after that."

De Larrea said the course, Jonesboro Country Club, looks to be in superb condition for the event. Similar to the women, the men have also changed up their practice strategy with a reward system.

"If you don't break this number, you're going to do extra running or extra workouts," De Larrea said in reference to forcing the players to score well. "So whenever they get to the situation that they are starting to play bad, they just don't give up just because it's one more day out there and doesn't mean anything. They just keep playing hard and just keep fighting because there is something at stake."

He also said that teammates are feeding off each other and that it will give them confidence going in to the tournament.



FEATURE

## See JANE RUN RUN JANE RUN

Another installment of the continuing How-To Series from The Pan American

By Sara Hernandez  
THE PAN AMERICAN

Developed in the early 20th century to challenge the old custom of digging holes into the ground, starting blocks are now used in sprint events such as the 100-, 200-, and 400-meter dash, as well as in the 100-, 110- and 400-meter hurdles.

The start sets up the race. The person who gets cleanest can accelerate better than his or her competitors, leading to an early advantage.

### WHAT IS A STARTING BLOCK?

A starting block is a metal frame that is attached to the ground temporarily. It has a pair of adjustable, triangular pedals, one to each side, to embrace the feet. The block is used to increase the athlete's power off the starting line.

The blocks should be placed straight, in the middle of the lane for the 100-meter run and the hurdles races. In the 200- and 400-meter runs, they may be tilted to the runner's right when standing behind it because the race starts on a curve, but this is up to the athlete.

The standard arrangement is to set the first pedal two runner's feet behind the starting line, leaving one-foot spacing between the first and second pedals. The athlete decides which leg to put in front, according to which position feels more comfortable and which leg is the runner's natural take-off leg.

Commonly, the stronger leg is placed in front, because it will be the one the athlete uses to push off, but some people follow the technique of pushing the runner from the back in a standing position. The leg that reacts first and gives the first step is generally the natural take-off leg.

### ON YOUR MARKS!

In the first phase, the toes of both feet should touch the ground and the runner's chin should be relatively parallel to the ground.

The hands should be positioned five to 10 centimeters wider than the shoulders. Although straight, the arms shouldn't be tense; some flexibility should be allowed in the elbows.

This period is mostly to prepare for going into the "set" stage on the official starter's vocalized call. Some athletes follow a routine before getting in the blocks, while others like to get in quickly. This is the runner's decision and the official must wait for all the competitors to be in position before giving the next command.

"I take five steps forward, I squat down four bounces, I put my left leg stretching out backwards so I make sure my left leg is in the block first, then I put my right leg

in," junior and 200-meter runner Cecilia Lott said. "I lean back, look around wide, put my hands to the line, rock forward, put my head down...and then I wait."

### SET!

As the official gives the "set" command, the hips of a runner rise about six inches above one's shoulders forming a 90-degree angle in the bend of the front leg, and an approximately 120-degree angle to the back leg.

At this point, both feet are fully against the pedals, and the head follows the alignment of the back by looking directly between the legs. Since the weight of the body is now mostly on the arms and shoulders, the tip of the head should be slightly over the starting line.

This position is intended to get the runner ready to propel his or her body forward and attain momentum in the takeoff. Moving before the gun goes off is considered a false start, resulting in disqualification of the participant.

### GO!

At the moment the gun goes off, both feet should press on the blocks to attain a powerful takeoff. The back leg is the first one to move, while the front leg stays in contact with the pedal for a longer period of time, allowing a push to drive the opposite leg into a powerful first step.

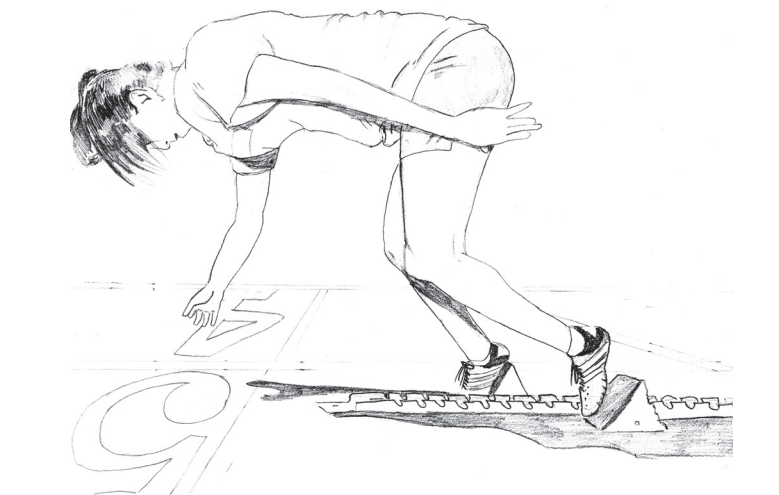
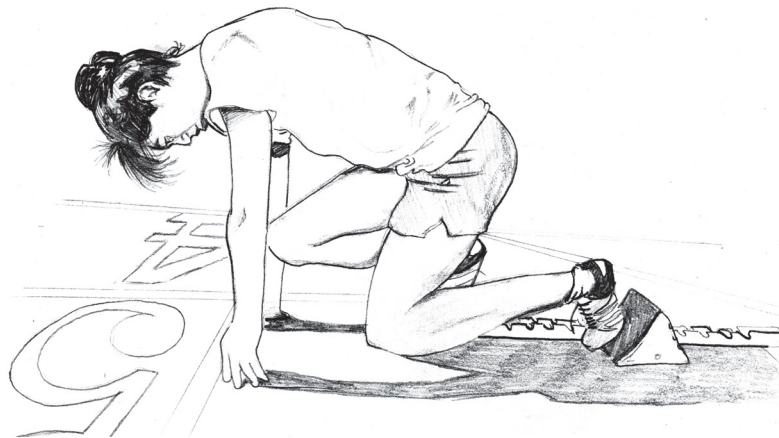
The first three strides provide momentum; the driving phase lasts for the first 10-20 meters. This means that the head remains down, steps are quick and powerful, and the runner is pumping his or her arms fairly hard, maintaining a rotating motion from the lower back to eye level. Elbows should be bent at a 90-degree angle.

The body of the runner should smoothly straighten up, mimicking the way an airplane takes off.

Although having a good, accurate start may seem overrated, it is considered the most important part of the race by some. Having an explosive takeoff provides the runner momentum to efficiently reach maximum velocity, giving the runner confidence to establish a good race by executing things the right way.

"When I'm 'on your marks,' I always clear my head and say, 'you know what? I train too hard, I come this far, I'm gonna win this race,'" sophomore and 400-meter runner Jameson Strachan said. "Once the announcer says 'set,' my head goes blank; I see white smoke in my head, I know the race is about to start."

The start is the basement of a good race. The seconds the competitor is in the blocks contain the adrenaline that is released with the sound of the gun, after which everything turns into magic.



ILLUSTRATIONS BY ANTHONY SALINAS

## Sports Commentary

### Tiger masters The Masters to provide relief

By Pedro Perez IV  
THE PAN AMERICAN

Last weekend ground crews all over the country were putting the finishing touches on their respective baseball fields for MLB's opening day.

Unfortunately for my favorite team, Houston Astros, the Chicago Cubs' Carlos Zambrano pitched a flawless six innings Monday to seal the deal against the 'Stros.

But there is no need on crying over spilled milk. I've got a whole summer to go with baseball.

This weekend though, ground crews will be tending to a different type of green. This is the weekend golf fans have been waiting for since the return of Tiger Woods.

The Masters, the first major Woods will compete in since his epic and stellar performance at the 2008 U.S. Open - where he outlasted Rocco Mediate in an extra day 18-hole play-off on a busted knee.

Now with an Arnold Palmer Invitational victory under his belt, one can only wonder what Woods' performance will be at Augusta.

Will the number one player in the world, a title he retained even during a six-month hiatus, put on his Sunday red and dominate the field? Or will he be so far behind on Sunday that his signature fist pumps will show no signs of punching the air to any effect.

One thing is for certain though, everyone will be gunning for Woods. And the beauty of the situation is that the only one who tarnish his performance at Augusta his Woods himself.

Sure some might say well Phil Mickelson has a green jacket, he's number two right now and creeping up close to Woods in the rankings. I would respond Phil actually has two green jackets, and he didn't even make the cut at the Houston Open last weekend.

I don't discredit Mickelson at all, that's not what I'm saying.

But the fact is, golf is popular because of Tiger. When he plays, people watch. Millions of fans wait for that moment when Woods lines up a put for a birdie on the 18th green, knowing well that he needs to sink it to win. And when the ball reaches the cup and just falls, the famous fist pump punches the air and the fans go crazy.

He's a rockstar who has made golf fun for the public and not just for "members only." Hopefully for America's sake Woods pulls it off on Sunday because right now this country needs some good news.

Michigan State playing the Final Four in Detroit was good news. It took us away from the "bailout" headlines for a weekend. And Woods will do the same, because Woods at Augusta is good news.