

9-27-2012

The Pan American (2012-09-27)

Karen Antonacci

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.utrgv.edu/panamerican>

Recommended Citation

The Pan American (ELIBR-0072). UTRGV Digital Library, The University of Texas – Rio Grande Valley

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Special Collections and Archives at ScholarWorks @ UTRGV. It has been accepted for inclusion in University Newspaper - The Pan American by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks @ UTRGV. For more information, please contact justin.white@utrgv.edu, william.flores01@utrgv.edu.



HESTEC



Stunt specialist, interactive exhibits and more

Online

Michio Kaku



Renowned scientist leaves audience in awe

Page 3

Obesity Epidemic

Valley rated heaviest in nation

Page 6

panamericanonline.com



Student Leadership Day

Watch experiments by science and math students



TAKEN



Kidnapping victim returns to family: Campus reacts

By Daniella Diaz
THE PAN AMERICAN

When news spread about the alleged kidnapping that took place Tuesday night in a University parking lot, social media buzzed as various UTPA community members worried about the situation and safety for people on campus.

The kidnapped female was returned to her family Thursday morning with no additional information from UTPA PD.

It seems that students around campus don't feel as panicked about what happened as those talking on Facebook and Twitter.

"I don't think it's a reason to be alarmed or overreact," said Michael Garza, a junior marketing major from Edinburg. "Especially over social media, people hear things and turn it around and overreact, but it could happen anywhere."

A crime alert, or Timely Warning Notification, was sent at 9:23 p.m. to the University community Tuesday night to inform of the alleged kidnapping outside the Education Building.

"(The University) emailed us, and I wouldn't have known otherwise," said Victoria Ceballos,

a junior kinesiology major from Harlingen. "They did a good job in alerting us. I mean, what else can you do?"

In response to Tuesday's incident, a petition requesting University officials take the initiative to install more lighting in student parking lots was post-

time of publication.

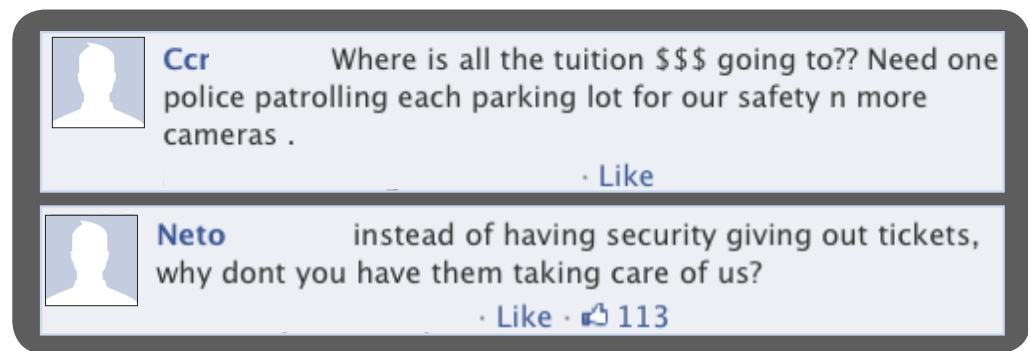
THE SITUATION

The alleged kidnapping was called in by a witness to UTPA PD, who reported that a female was forced into a vehicle in Lot T2, with one of the two suspects covering her mouth with

Adrian Castillo/The Pan American
mechanical engineering major from Weslaco, doesn't blame the University for what happened.

"Unless you have security posted for every section guarding people, (the University) couldn't have done anything," he said.

Becerra said he believed the incident was probably specific to



ed on The UTPA Student Facebook page.

The petition also calls for the University Police Department to offer students, faculty and staff an escort to their cars on campus. However, the PD already offers this service, and has placed blue emergency posts around campus for students to use upon request.

The petition has had over 2,000 Facebook likes since the

his hand.

According to the UTPA police, two Hispanic males are the suspects, one with a dark complexion, a light beard and a tattoo or birthmark on his left arm. The second suspect is described as in his mid-to-late 20s and weighing approximately 240 pounds, according to the Timely Warning Notification.

Abel Becerra, a senior me-

the victim, and that there is not a reason to be alarmed.

"I'm shocked, not scared because kidnappings are for personal reasons and they don't target random people," he said.

At the time of publication, Public Affairs and UTPA PD had no additional comments.

Karen Antonacci also contributed to this article.

OUR IDEAL CANDIDATE

Editorial by *The Pan American Staff*

We found ourselves pondering the presidential candidates for the upcoming election and we're not entirely satisfied with what they have to offer the American public. So we brainstormed and below is a portrait of the qualities we believe our ideal candidate should have:



Letter to the Editor

It is easy to speak of goodwill, compassion, and brotherly love with no intention of acting upon it. As UTPA's first secular organization, we have found ourselves on a very lonely plane of existence; ironically, not from our lack of faith but from having too much faith in our fellow students and administration. On the first day of school, the Atheist Student Organization positioned itself as the local vanguard to the New Civil Rights Movement with little to no infantry. At the Chick-fil-a Protest we were met with an enemy more lethal than the capitalist. We were met with absence. We discovered our true adversary was not Sodexo or Chick-fil-a, but an over population of the pseudo-righteous, those who act the part but fail to act.

Our faction does not stand for idleness but for a more ideal world where the approximation of truth and values are far more accurate than those presented by simple-minded charlatans. We refuse to wait for an idle idol to answer prayers and we chose

to act on behalf of humanity, here, on earth and today. It has been reported that Chick-fil-a has decided to pull its monetary contributions from a select number of anti-gay religious foundations they had previously donated to. The victory is marginal and bittersweet. I remain hopeful that next time ASO moves to advance society, a few more will follow our lead.

And even if you are against us, we are still with you.

Michael Mena, M.M.
Atheist Student Organization-
Vice President

Photo of the Week



Ricardo Lara/The Pan American

UTPA President Robert Nelsen (left) and U.S Congressman Ruben Hinojosa visit the 2012 HESTEC Education Day events at UTPA on Monday.

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. We cannot publish anonymous letters or submissions containing hate speech or gratuitous personal attacks. Please send all letters to thepanamerican@gmail.com



#UTPA

Tweet at us! @ThePanAmerican

#PrintMe

Well I don't have to worry about muggings anymore. Just kidnapping. #UTPA

- @EI_Palomares

No word bank. Everybody panics. #UTPA

- @dreamelissa

Over these #GDI arguments in my sociology of religion class.

#utpa #sociology #religion

- @EdgrrrTheKSig

news

A GATHERING OF LITERARY ARTISTS

Creative writing teachers hold annual conference at UTPA

By Charles Vale
THE PAN AMERICAN

Attention poets, novelists and creative writing enthusiasts. The Texas Association of Creative Writing Teachers will have its annual conference in the Communication Arts and Sciences building Thursday at 2 p.m.

The conference is scheduled to last three days, ending the afternoon of Sept. 29.

"The last conference was hosted by Austin Community College. They haven't had a conference down here in about 10 years. We are all very excited," said Philip Zwerling, the association's president, a playwright, and assistant professor of English at UTPA.

The conference will be open to students, faculty and general members of the community. Over its duration, 52 speakers will cover a wide variety of topics such as creative nonfiction, poetry, fiction as well as topics designed to help aspiring authors, such as generating new material and getting works published. Among the guest speak-

ers will be Jan Seale, the current Texas Poet Laureate, a title granted to a citizen of Texas who is recognized by a government committee for being an out-

standing poet. He also wrote several works of fiction featured in journals such as *Other Voices* and *Story Quarterly*.

While at the University of Texas at Dallas, Nelsen authored a collection of short stories titled *Orphans, Bums and Angels* as well as a career in administration. Each year, the contestants' works are submitted to the contest, prior to the conference by their sponsor. The sponsors of the student are professors and instructors who select the works from the classes they teach.

Attendees of the conference will get the chance to mingle with other authors, share their works with each other and get feedback.

"Students will get to meet people from across the state and learn where their works can be published," Zwerling

said. "They'll also get to learn from others, make connections and network."

Zwerling received his Ph.D. at the University of California-Santa Barbara in dramatic arts, as well as a Master's in Fine Arts in creative writing at the University of New Orleans. He also has a master's of divinity in theology from Harvard University and a bachelors in philosophy and religion from St. Lawrence University. He has written several articles published in magazines and journals, as well as several original plays such as *The Playwright's Nightmare* and *I of Newt*. Zwerling also authored the book *Nicaragua: A New Kind of Revolution*.

For the student looking to study the field of creative writing, the university offers a creative writing minor as well as a graduate program where the interested individual can earn a Master's in Fine Arts in the creative writing field.

The Texas Association of Creative Writing Teachers was created in the mid-1970s and is composed mainly of teachers, professors, students and

individual writers. Members work toward the development and expansion of literary arts in Texas. The association also sponsors writing contests for students as well as for literary journals and magazines.

The deadline for this year's contests was back in June, and were for both graduate and undergraduate students. Categories were poetry, creative nonfiction, and fiction. The winners of the contest were from various universities across Texas, such as The University of Dallas and Texas Christian University, however, no UTPA students placed first this year. The winners will read their works at the conference and each be awarded an iPad provided by the University.

There is a \$10 registration fee to attend the conference. Students can register in person or online at TACWT.org.

“They haven't had a conference down here in about 10 years. We are all very excited.”
- Philip Zwerling
President, Texas Association of Creative Writing Teachers

ers will be Jan Seale, the current Texas Poet Laureate, a title granted to a citizen of Texas who is recognized by a government committee for being an out-

standing poet. He also wrote several works of fiction featured in journals such as *Other Voices* and *Story Quarterly*. Attendees of the conference will get the chance to mingle with other authors, share their works with each other and get feedback. "Students will get to meet people from across the state and learn where their works can be published," Zwerling

Vol. 69, No. 5

THE PAN AMERICAN

thepanamerican@gmail.com

1201 West University, CAS 170

Edinburg, Texas 78539

Phone: (956) 665-2541

Fax: (956) 316-7122

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF:
Karen Antonacci

NEWS EDITOR:
Daniella Diaz

SPORTS EDITOR:
Norma Gonzalez

ARTS & LIFE EDITOR:
Lea Victoria Juarez

PHOTOGRAPHY EDITOR:
Adrian Castillo

DESIGN EDITOR:
Karen Villarreal

MULTIMEDIA EDITOR:
Dimitra Hernandez

ADVISER:
Dr. Greg Selber

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSOCIATE:
Anita Reyes

ADVERTISING MANAGER:
Mariel Cantu

WEBMASTERS:
Jose Villarreal

SOCIAL MEDIA EDITOR:
David Alvarado

The Pan American is the official student newspaper of The University of Texas-Pan American. Views presented are those of the writers and do not necessarily reflect those of the paper or university.

Next Delivery:
Oct. 4 at noon

KAKU TALKS THE FUTURE

Renowned scientist leaves audience in awe

By Justin O'Donnell
THE PAN AMERICAN

Eleven hundred science enthusiasts from across the Valley filtered into UTPA's Fieldhouse Tuesday, forming a line that stretched all the way to the former Fine Arts Auditorium. People were there to see world-renowned Michio Kaku's presentation. Another 400 watched a live stream of the event from the Student Union after the venue reached capacity.

The presentation covered the science and possible technologies of the near future, topics straight from Kaku's newest book, *The Physics of the Future*.

Kaku's presentation kicked off the 8th season of the annual Distinguished Speakers Series, a program which brings notable and influential individuals to campus to speak, such as Bill Clinton and Maya Angelou in the past. The event was free and open to the public.

The night opened with words by Kenneth Buckman, UTPA's associate provost for student engagement and experiential learning and chair of the Speaker Series. He delivered a short speech on wonder and humankind's pursuit of knowledge.

"We have an infinite number of alternative universes right next to us where all possibilities play

out," said Buckman, a former philosophy professor and leader of the Guerra Honors Program.

Upon walking on stage, Kaku commented on his inclu-

waves in the past: steam, electricity and computers. He predicted that humanity is nearing a fourth wave.

"The fourth wave, we think,

penny. That's the cost of scrap paper."

Augmented reality was a technology that he discussed in depth, saying that in the future people will wear glasses connected to the Internet that show them information on the people and things around them, as well as serve as an instant translator.

However, Kaku explained a problem with these AR glasses: some people do not like glasses, after which, he changed the slide to a diagram of an augmented reality contact lens, to which there was an audible gasp from the audience.

The future of medical technology was also discussed in depth. Kaku claimed that in the near future, nanomachines, which are machines so small they cannot be seen, will be used to eradicate tumors as a much safer, more effective and more comfortable alternative to chemotherapy.

Additionally, medical professionals will soon be able to grow organs from an individual's own cells - organs that can be transplanted with no possibility of rejection.

Kaku also proposed that humans may be able to stop the aging process.

"Aging is error, the build up of genetic and cellular error," he said. "But the body has error correcting mechanisms. We can

In the future, when you walk into a room you will mentally control everything around you. Just like a magician. Just like a God.

- Michio Kaku
Theoretical physicist

sion in New York Magazine's list of 100 smartest people.

"But in all fairness, I have to admit Madonna also made that list," he joked. "And I understand that Lady Gaga is going to push me off that list entirely."

Kaku went on to talk about the predictive nature of physics and physicists, joking and quoting the likes of Yogi Berra and Woody Allen. He illustrated how technology gets introduced in waves, which eventually leads to economic failure, and used the Great Depression and the recession of 2008 as examples. Kaku stated that there were three innovation

will be a combination of biotechnology, nanotechnology and artificial intelligence," said the scientist, who helped form Superstring theory and pioneered String Field Theory.

Moore's Law was also a staple of Kaku's presentation. The theory proposes throughout the history of computers that the number of transistors on circuits will double every two years, in effect causing computing power to double every two years.

"Your cellphone today has more computer power than all of NASA in 1969," he said. "In 2020, computer chips will cost a



Adrian Castillo/The Pan American
Michio Kaku, an American theoretical physicist, speaks Monday at UTPA during the first part of the Distinguished Speaker series. Kaku gave a comic speech about technology and people's lives in the future 100 years from today.

accentuate these error-correcting mechanisms. Right now, we have doubled the lifespan of every animal we've tested."

Mike Portillo, a 23-year-old physics major at STC, traveled from Weslaco to watch the presentation.

"It felt like coming to a rock concert," Portillo said. "It means more people (in the Valley) are open to science."

After the completion of Kaku's speech, the floor opened for questions from the audience.

"We should consider the negative consequences (of tech-

nology)... We should not emphasize the consumptive uses of technology," posed one member of the audience.

"Science is a sword," Kaku responded. "It's the most powerful sword we have. But it could cut against you unless you're careful."

After Kaku's predictions the audience left in a combination of wonder, excitement and awe.

"In the future, when you walk into a room you will mentally control everything around you," Kaku said. "Just like a magician. Just like a God."

New agreements signed to smooth over STC transfers

By Charles Vale
THE PAN AMERICAN

In an ongoing collaboration, UTPA and South Texas College signed several articulation agreements at the beginning of the semester designed to ease the transfer of students from one institution to the other.

The agreements will allow students seeking to continue their education after acquiring an associate's degree with STC to easily transfer over and pursue a bachelor's at UTPA, saving them the trouble of having to re-take certain classes.

Last fall, 746 students transferred from STC, accounting for 81.4 percent of all transfer students in total, according to the UTPA factbook.

"The agreements mostly resolve smaller inconsistencies," said Kristin Croyle, vice provost

for undergraduate education. "The impact on the students is that it will save them from tak-

81.4%
OF ALL UTPA
TRANSFER
STUDENTS
ARE FROM
STC

Source: UTPA factbook

ing courses that would have been redundant otherwise."

On Aug. 30, a ceremony for the agreement was held at the University's ITT building. There were 12 agreements that were signed involving five arts degrees, one communication degree and six degrees from the

science, technology, engineering and mathematic fields.

This isn't the first time the two institutions have worked together to help smooth over the transfer process. There have been several general articulation pacts starting in 1997, but the two other major ones besides the most recent were in 2009 and 2011.

The agreements don't only apply to students with associate's degrees. Those simply looking to switch institutions are given a suggested four-year road map that plans out classes they need to take to work toward their degree.

"It's very important for us in this region," Croyle said. "There is a dominant educational pathway here where students aren't transferring out (from STC), but are coming here."

Some students had expe-

rienced little to no problems making the change from STC to UTPA. However, others, such as Maribel Ramirez, a 23-year-old English major from Elsa, have not had a pleasant experience.

"A lot of the classes I took at STC didn't even transfer, and I was there for a whole year," she said. "Why did I take them? I could have saved my time."

Measures have been taken in the past besides the articulation agreements to help make it easier for students to transfer. On ASSIST, there is an online equivalency guide where students can select what institution they are transferring from, which brings up a list of what transfers over. However, some have still had issues with the guide itself.

"They do have the equivalency guide, but it doesn't distinguish between upper and

lower classes," said Stephanie Segura, a 23-year-old psychology major from Elsa. "They tell you what transfers, but not

746
STUDENTS
TRANSFERED
FROM STC
LAST FALL

Source: UTPA factbook

what they count for."

Laura Saenz, associate vice provost for curriculum, teaching and assessment, believes the articulation agreements should help solve this issue.

"When the course titles and numbers aren't the same, it takes cooperation between the facul-

ty members to fix it," she explained. "It's good for the students. The document helps them, but it's better when they know that STC and UTPA are communicating."

There is also the website, www.stc2utpa.org, which offers information for students on financial aid, advisement and resources the two institutions provide, along with other general information for students looking to transfer over.

Despite issues in the past, Ramirez expressed a positive outlook regarding the efforts made with the recent agreements, and praised the two institutions' efforts to smooth over the transfer issue.

"I think it's good. There are a lot of people who don't get financial aid who take certain classes at STC," she concluded. "It makes it easier for them to take cheaper

TENNIS CAMP for beginners

\$10.00 WRSC MEMBERS
\$40 non-WRSC MEMBERS



WRSC Outdoor Tennis Courts
October 2nd–October 30th
tuesdays & thursdays
5:30–6:30pm



For special accommodations or more information call 956-665-7808



IS LOOKING FOR: DELIVERY PERSON

For more information please contact us at
(956) 665-2541 or come by **COAS 170**
 { spubs@utpa.edu }



START HIGHER.

START TAKING CHARGE.

START UNBREAKABLE FRIENDSHIPS.

START MAKING A MARK.

START LEADING.

START SHOWING THE WAY.

START OUT ON TOP.

START STRONG.™

There's strong. Then there's Army Strong. By enrolling in Army ROTC you will develop leadership skills and earn an Army Officer's commission after graduation – two things that will help ensure you succeed in life. You may also be eligible for up to a full-tuition scholarship to help you pay for your college degree. With a start like that, there is no limit to what you can achieve.



ARMY ROTC

To get started, visit goarmy.com/rotc/s767.



U.S. ARMY
ARMY STRONG.®

Visit the Army Interactive Display at The University of Texas - Pan American during HESTEC week and learn about military robotics, future technologies, and career opportunities in STEM. For more information, please contact Mr. Abel Gonzalez at 956-665-3600 or gonzaleza@utpa.edu.



UTPA hosts play on border violence

By Ayesha Zahid
The Pan American

I spent two days re-reading the interviews and wondering if I was qualified enough to tell this story. It's not just about the Mexican cartel violence, and it's not just about a play. It's about people's lives, and what they are risking (remaining anonymous) to portray the "monsters" at the Texas-Mexico border. It is a story about determination, drive and a small acting troupe's ability to move people nationwide with a story—a real, awful, honest story about children back home.

Crawling With Monsters is the result of a group of students

and their drama professor attempting to perform a play for children in Mexico. When a travel warning was issued by the University due to drug violence in Mexico in 2009, the troupe, many of whom are from south of the border, decided to make a new piece of art based on the situation they faced.

The students began to record families across the border talking about their experiences with drug cartel violence, which has been rampant for the past six years. The result of these harsh and true stories is a nationally performed production by students from and outside of

the University. The play has been performed in New York, New Orleans, Chicago, and San Antonio.

Using music, original video from interviews and photography on stage along with their acting, *The Sleepy Border Town Insomniacs* (as the troupe is also known) relay the terror children across the border face on a sometimes daily basis.

"It is an effort to let people know about the situation in northeastern Mexico," said the playwright (who asked to remain unidentified). "Much of which is not covered in the press because of intimidation."

The play was originally to be performed everywhere but the Rio Grande Valley for safety reasons. However, some of the actors from Mexico strongly urged the writer to let them do it in the Valley.

"...For a long time, I resisted," he said. "But I think things have gotten better in this area. People aren't as afraid, and there is more being reported than there used to be two years ago."

Reynosa, just across the border from McAllen, has been a battlefield for shootouts between drug cartels since 2009. Reporting on the incidents has not been without consequences — reporters have been tortured and killed by members of cartels. The residents of Reynosa are also not always willing to speak out against what is happening, in fear of being targeted by narcos. It was difficult for the group of students to find people willing to talk for interviews for the play.

"That was one of the hardest parts," the writer said. "People were really afraid back in 2010. Reporters were being killed and beaten up ... tortured."

This fear is what keeps the *Sleepy Border Town Insomniacs* working under anonymity and seeking a secure environment as they perform roles of children and adults affected by the violence. Many of the actors have family in Mexico, and several of them still live there.

SHARING THE STORY

Since the spring of 2010, *Crawling With Monsters* has

been performed in distant cities as far away as New York, and has been part of several "fringe festivals" around the nation. Work in the Fringe genre is unlike conventional theater, as it experiments with new forms of theater. *The Insomniacs*, for instance, use multimedia on stage along with live music.

Since the play focuses on children, reactions at the national festivals have been intense.

"It's heart-wrenching," the writer explained. "It's very emotional. You get to the children being frightened, somewhat traumatized ... so it's a very emotional work and people have been affected."

The actors have been approached by people, some who could relate to what was going on and were glad to know it was being talked about, and others who had no idea that the environment on the border has become this hostile.

"There was a man from India," said Silvia (last name withheld), an actress in the play. "He was very touched, because the part of the country he was from was going through a similar situation."

HITTING THE VALLEY

After two years of performing in cities around the nation, *Crawling With Monsters* has finally made a stop at UTPA. The show opens on Oct. 2 at 7:30 p.m. at the Albert L. Jeffers Theatre.

"We don't really promote it," said Mariana, who is also part of the show. "But this is a

play people need to see. We want [them] to know that."

Mariana also emphasized that as long as things are bad in Mexico and as long as there are people willing to do the show and an audience to perform for, the play will keep on going.

"I think this is one of the good things about theater," said Silvia, "We are trying to be part of the people, and make the people feel like part of the theater."

Performance times:

Oct. 2

7:30 p.m.

UTPA opening night

Oct. 3-5

7:30 p.m.

Oct. 6

2 p.m.

Spanish version

7:30 p.m.

Oct. 7

2 p.m.



Photo courtesy of Sleepy Border Town Insomniacs

A HEAVY ISSUE

Experts weigh in on Valley obesity epidemic

By Desirae Vela
THE PAN AMERICAN

The obesity rate of 38.8 percent in the McAllen metropolitan area is the highest rate in America, according to the Gallup-Healthways Well-Being Index.

In an effort to prevent childhood obesity, on Aug. 31 of this year, President Barack Obama proclaimed September as National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month and signed a Presidential Memorandum creating the first-ever Task Force on Childhood Obesity.

Gallup also reported that the McAllen metropolitan area pays more than \$400 million in unnecessary healthcare costs each year because of its high obesity rate.

"If (the locals) reduced the obesity rate to 15 percent, the area could potentially save more than \$250 million annually," according to the Well-Being Index.

Gallup tracks U.S. obesity levels by using Americans' self-reported height and weight to calculate [Body Mass Index](#) scores. A BMI of 30 or higher is considered obese. Foods popular in the Mexican culture are predominant in the Valley and

are partially why it is a problem for the people of the area.

"In our culture here in the Valley we eat the very high cholesterol and high fatty foods like

tortillas, menudo, rice and beans," said Patricia G. Lopez, registered and Texas-licensed dietitian. "Part of the problem is that kids eat adult-size servings. The serving

size for a child should be about as big as the palm of their hand."

Obesity is a precursor to type II diabetes and other complications. Since obesity rates in the

Valley have increased, more cases of diabetes and heart disease have followed. The Valley region in Texas has a diabetes rate of about three times the national rate, according to the American Diabetes Association.

"We have such a high rate of diabetes as well, and when your body is producing too much insulin you tend to gain more weight. Type II diabetes used to be more known as an adult type of diabetes but we've been seeing a high rise in numbers of children developing it," Lopez said. "Exercise will definitely reduce obesity here in the Valley but most people don't have the time."

Other cities throughout the United States have also seen a rise in obesity. Figures from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention show 35.7 percent of U.S. adults and approximately 17 percent of children and adolescents aged 2-19 years are obese. Preventative care is key to the reduction of obesity rates in the future according to Tanya Connors, a physical therapist from

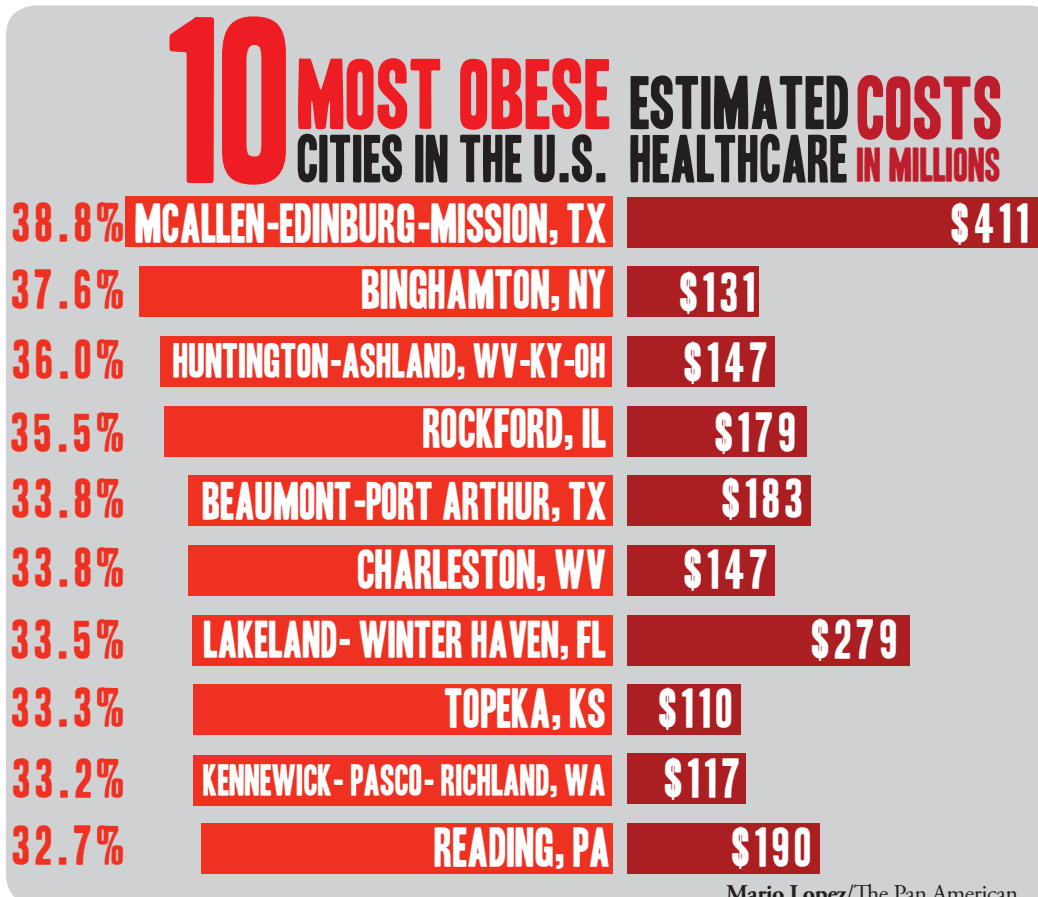
McAllen at Rehab Plus.

"Instead of treating the issue, we need to treat the cause," Connors said. "A couple of years ago, they would allow a child to come into physical therapy three times a week if they were overweight. Now, it's something that's not reimbursable. If they are not paying for preventative care then the rate later on in life is going to be higher."

First Lady Michelle Obama is also working on projects to help reduce childhood obesity. Beginning with her public garden at the White House and the release of her book, *American Grown: The Story of the White House Kitchen Garden and Gardens Across America*, she has launched the initiative Let's Move, to help provide healthier foods and physical activity in schools and homes.

Better health begins at home and a change in habits will help render a decrease in the Valley's high obesity rate, according to Lopez.

"In order to be successful with weight loss it needs to include the whole family," she said. "When you have one person in the family who is trying to make healthier choices but other people are not going along with it, it makes it difficult."



FIGHTING KONY FOR MOTHERLAND UGANDA

Advocacy group strives to raise funds for women in Africa

By Dana Nazarova and
David Alvarado
THE PAN AMERICAN

Deals and donations were the focus of a Sept. 22 fundraiser for women in post-conflict Uganda, held at McAllen's bar Roosevelt's at 7.

The pledge drive was organized by Janneth Clark, a student at UTPA. All proceeds went to The Motherland Uganda, a group helping African women who have been affected by the militant activities of Joseph Kony's Lord Resistance Army.

The LRA is a rebel group led by Kony that operates in northern Uganda, South Sudan, and parts of the Democratic Republic of Congo. The armed group has been accused by the International Criminal Court in the Hague of human rights violations including forcing children to become soldiers, sex slavery and murder.

"I decided to have this

"I am trying to show the reality, that everyone in Uganda is really focused on reconstruction, everyone is eager to move on, that there is hope out there."

- Janneth Clark
Event Organizer

event because I spent six months in Uganda," said Clark, a 23-year-old international relations major. "While doing it I've met groups of women and wanted to help them."

The Motherland Uganda is a community-based group that consists of young mothers who have united together to improve their standard of living through education and skill building. Many of these women are ex-LRA Army captives.

Roosevelt's at 7 regularly hosts

charity events where wine and beer are sold at happy hour prices. The modest-size crowd enjoyed free hors d'oeuvres during the screening of *Journey to Joseph Kony's North Uganda Through the Eyes of Women and Children*, a short film put together by Clark which portrays everyday life in Uganda for women and children. Authentic African jewelry clothing was also for sale.

The LRA is still fresh in the minds of most people thanks to the Kony 2012 campaign launched by

Invisible Children, a non-profit organization founded in 2004 that seeks to bring an end to the activities of the militant group and its leader. The activist organization posted a video on YouTube that called for citizen-activists to "Cover the Night" April 20 by posting visual displays around their community in order to bring attention to the cause. The 30-minute video instantly went viral and has been viewed almost 100 million times on YouTube.

The campaign also received widespread criticism from observers for the U.S.-based advocacy group's questionable spending practices. According to the blog, "Visible Children," only a third of the organization's funding goes to directly supporting those affected by the LRA.

After Kony 2012, many people have misconceptions about what is going on in Uganda, according to Clark.

"I am trying to show the reali-

ty, that everyone in Uganda is really focused on reconstruction," said Clark, who spent six and a half months in Africa. "Everyone is eager to move on, that there is hope out there."

The Motherland Uganda's goal is to purchase both seeds for farming and 10 sewing machines to produce clothes.

The Export Promotions Board, a Kampala-based branch of the Ministry of Tourism which oversees Uganda's exports, cites 2011 as a very difficult year for agriculture. Economic conditions for the southwestern African nation have since been on a steady decline and exports are at an all-time low. The price of commodities such as sugar, fish and milk has risen over 200 percent.

During the event, Clark presented her documentary to prospective donors. It points out that young children have been forced to act and think as adults and that

Westerners have misconceptions about Africa.

"You have no idea how much you are actually going to learn just being there and seeing all of it," Clark explained. "For me, the trip to Africa was a life-changing event."

Spending six months in the impoverished African country was a difficult adjustment.

"Just being there alone as a woman and standing out so much," said Clark, who hails from Donna. "(There's) constant attention from people who are looking at you because you are so different."

Clark's desire to study development was her primary drive to travel across the world.

"I figured, if you want to study development go and study at the place which is developing right now," she concluded.

READY OR NOT

Lady Broncs hope to roll into conference on high note

Photos and Story by
Norma Gonzalez
The Pan American



Sarah Joy Davis

After sweeping the competition at the Spartan Invitational in Virginia last weekend and going on a three-game winning streak, the Lady Broncs look to beat Texas Southern University Thursday night before starting conference play Saturday.

The Broncs (6-10), who were 3-16 at this time last year, have been improving throughout the season.

"We're progressing," Assistant Coach Margot Frederick said. "We're kind of peaking at the right time. We can do some damage."

This weekend's game will set the tone for Great West Conference action. Although the team would like a W tonight to keep the momentum going, the main focus is starting the GWC journey off right.

"We're focusing on Texas Southern right now, for Thursday night, then we'll refocus on NJIT," Head Coach Brian Yale said, referencing the conference opener Saturday against New Jersey Institute of Technology. "I just talked about the big key for this weekend is coming home 1-0 in conference. If we don't come out of the weekend 1-0 in conference then it'll be an uphill climb."

Yale attributes part of the recent success to team chemistry, saying that this year's girls have gotten a lot closer and therefore will fight for each other. His assistant agrees.

"I guess some of the sentiments [Yale's] had is the chemistry is a lot better. From a coaching perspective, the practice environment has improved immensely, so I think that's made a big impact," Frederick said. "How they

communicate on the court and off the court trickles over. We found that out last spring with so many underclassmen and they learned how to interact with each other as teammates."

Even though Frederick hasn't been able to join the girls on the road for every away game due to duties on recruiting trips, she feels the travelling have been helpful to the team's morale.

"I think that the long trips have helped more than they've hurt," she said. "Even when they had all the bus trouble, when they had a gas leak, coming home from the 12-hour-trip from Southeastern, that took like 20-some hours to come back, and they had a blast."

The team began little traditions to bond better. For example, every Wednesday the crew has a themed practice. Last week was Mustache Day, yesterday was Jersey Shore and next week they'll have Twin Day.

Besides partaking in these activities behind gym doors, fans can see them doing little rituals every time they score, coming to the middle of the court to congratulate each other.

"This group is getting along. They're fighting for each other," Yale said. "They're trusting each other. That's the big part of the transition process we've been working on the past two years."

Now that the team has gelled together, Yale is relieved to start playing only one or two games a week. The Lady Broncs have had 16 games so far, 13 as part of the four tournaments away from home.

"We're in the right place. I scheduled [the tournament] this way for a reason. I thought it could give us some good momentum," Yale said. "I thought by now we would have things going, and we do. We're fighting through some injuries, as I think everybody is at this point in the season. We played a lot of matches in a short amount of time."

Having such a heavy pre-conference season can tire out a team. Junior Nycole Masaki injured her right ankle during the last tournament. Earlier this week, libero Juri Franzen strained her back during a weight workout.

"It sucks, but it happened. So, from here, move forward and



Ijanae Holman (left) blocks a play and sends the ball back to Macey Singleton and Haley Durham during Wednesday's practice. The Lady Broncs face off against Texas Southern University tonight at 7 p.m.

try to take care of it and get better," Masaki, a Hawaiian native, said about her injury. "Right now my ankle is feeling alright, but we'll see what the trainers say and how the coaches feel about it."

Along with the three wins this past weekend, Masaki and Maria Kliefth earned All-Tournament Honors. Sophomore Kliefth was also named tournament MVP and GWC Player of the Week.

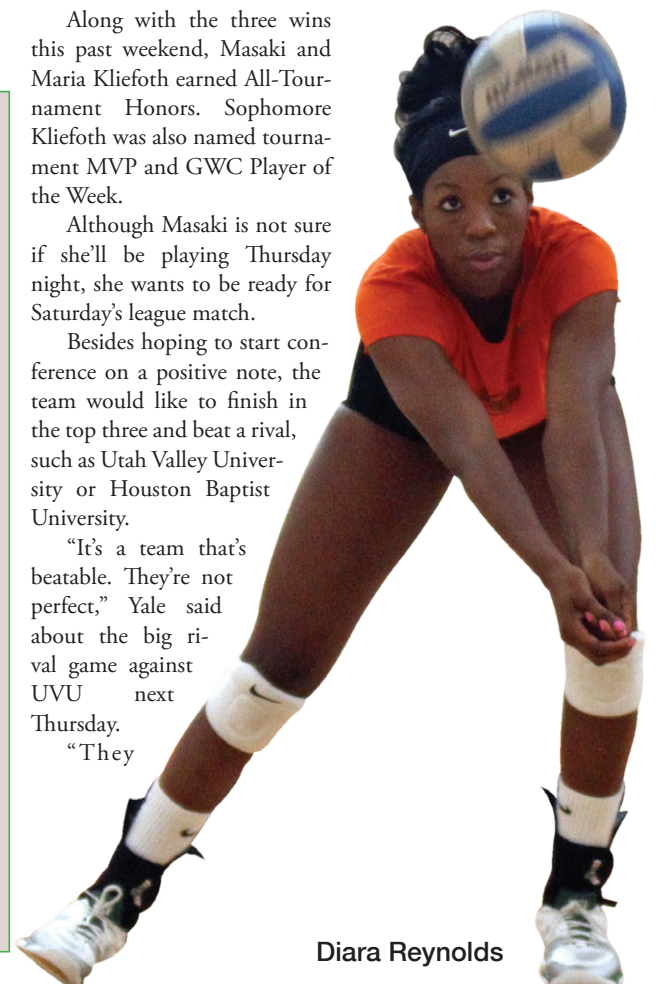
Although Masaki is not sure if she'll be playing Thursday night, she wants to be ready for Saturday's league match.

Besides hoping to start conference on a positive note, the team would like to finish in the top three and beat a rival, such as Utah Valley University or Houston Baptist University.

"It's a team that's beatable. They're not perfect," Yale said about the big rival game against UVU next Thursday.

"They

have their own issues going on right now. We'll have our hands full, but I think it's good to get them at home."



Diara Reynolds

Home Game Schedule

OCT. 4 - 6:30 P.M.
Utah Valley University

OCT. 6 - 7 P.M.
Universidad Autonoma de Nuevo Leon

OCT. 9 - 7 P.M.
Texas A&M University Kingsville

OCT. 13 - 1 P.M.
Chicago State University

OCT. 20 - 1 P.M.
Houston Baptist University

NOV. 1 - 6 P.M.
New Jersey Institute of Technology

"We're focusing on Texas Southern right now, for Thursday night, then we'll refocus on NJIT. I just talked about the big key for this weekend is coming home 1-0 in conference. If we don't come out of the weekend 1-0 in conference then it'll be an uphill climb."

- Brian Yale
Volleyball head coach

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS - PAN AMERICAN



Hispanic Engineering, Science & Technology Week

Ignite

THE POSSIBILITIES

COMMUNITY DAY

Saturday, September 29, 2012

4 - 10 P.M. • UTPA Campus



SUNNY SAUCEDA



FREE EVENT

SOLIDO



BBVA Compass

For more information or special accommodations, please contact the UTPA Department of Community Engagement at (956) 665-3361.