

In This Issue.....

Gator Life.....2

News.....9

Arts and Entertainment.....18

Opinions.....22



UHD hosts ring ceremony for graduates
see Gator Life, Page 5



Local Business Spotlight
see Gator Life, Page 8



Japan dumps radioactive water
see News, Page 13



Houston Hotspots - Museum Edition
see A&E, Page 18

New mural calls for interconnectedness of species in urban spaces

By Indira Zaldivar

On April 21, UHD hosted a panel discussion including the people who collaborated for the new mural on campus. The 223-foot-long mural spans along Brays Bayou Greenway Trail right below UHD’s historic One Main Building at the confluence of White Oak Bayou and Buffalo Bayou.

The mural is dedicated to bird migration and aims to raise awareness for Houston’s diversity of wildlife and the importance of improving the interconnectivity of species in an urban space.

The mural involved the work of painter, scientific illustrator and Ink Dwell Studio co-founder, Jane Kim, along with UHD faculty and members of Houston Parks Board, Houston Audubon and Buffalo Bayou Partnership. Houston Parks Board and

Buffalo Bayou Partnership commissioned the mural.

Buffalo Bayou is home to an array of species of birds. However, the mural was narrowed down to include six species.

The center of the mural showcases the six species in both their spring breeding plumage and their non-breeding plumage. The right exhibits three species of birds that winter in Houston. On the left are three species that make a stop in Houston for breeding.

Kim, who was referred to as the visionary of the project, said she witnessed an abundance of life during the six weeks she and her team painted the mural. She said that one of the goals of the mural is to “lift those blinders that we often have” when walking around an urban place.

“We should be on the lookout for wildlife,” Kim said. “Hopefully when we make all of these species hard to ignore through the act of monumentalizing them in a public artwork, then when [people] are out and about, they are more prone to seeing these animals in their daily lives.”

Learning to coexist with wildlife has become increasingly important with the world population growing. UHD’s urban location presents a way to model and teach students that “humans and other organisms can live together in a sustainable way,” according to UHD professor of biology and microbiology and director for Center for Urban Agriculture and Sustainability, Lisa Morano, Ph.D.

One way to act in favor of bird conservation

is planting native plants. Having native plants in gardens and partaking in sustainable strategies are a win-win situation for both wildlife and humans. The Sciences and Technology Building, the first gold level Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design building in UHS, prides in being home to a vast array of native plants.

The two bayous at UHD have always been an inspiration for UHD’s class projects. The new mural along the bayou adds another powerful illustration to communicate the rich wildlife that live along the bayous not only to UHD faculty, staff and students, but to the many Houstonians who enjoy Brays Bayou Greenway Trail.

Continued on page 7



The 223-foot-long mural spans along Brays Bayou Greenway Trail right below UHD’s historic One Main Building at the confluence of White Oak Bayou and Buffalo Bayou.



“Confluence” acknowledges Houston’s diversity of wildlife and aims to improve interconnectivity of species in urban spaces. Photo courtesy of Jaida Doll.



THE DATELINE

University of Houston-Downtown
1 Main Street, Houston, TX 77002
Office: S-260 Phone: 713.221.8275
editordatelinedowntown@gmail.com

Spring 2021 Staff

Editor.....Jaida Doll
Assistant Editor.....Indira Zaldivar
Social Media Manager.....Jema Pantoja
Business Manager.....Sheryl Sellers
News Section Editor.....Aansa Usmani
A&E Section Editor.....Varah Thornton
Opinions Section Editor.....Briana Garcia
Faculty Advisor.....Joe Sample, Ph.D.

The Dateline is the official student newspaper of the University of Houston-Downtown. Since its first issue in 1982, The Dateline is proud to be "Student Run since Volume One." We strive to meet the needs of a growing university as well as the growing metropolitan city that surrounds us.

Submission Policy

The Dateline staff consists of students from the University of Houston-Downtown who complete all tasks required to produce the newspaper, which serves all UHD campuses. The opinions and commentaries expressed within reflect the views of the contributing writers. No opinions expressed in The Dateline reflect the viewpoints of the University of Houston-Downtown, its administration, or students.

The Dateline reserves the right to edit or modify submissions for the sake of clarity, content, grammar, or space limitations. All submissions become property of The Dateline and may not be returned.

All paid writers must be currently enrolled students at the University of Houston-Downtown.

Press releases, story ideas, news tips and suggestions are always welcomed. We encourage all students to contribute.

Any student interested in joining The Dateline staff may request more detailed information sending an email to the editors at editordatelinedowntown@gmail.com.

Follow us on Social Media!



@the_dateline

Gators' guide to Ramadan By Aansa Usmani

Every year, Muslims worldwide come together and celebrate Ramadan, the ninth and holiest month of Islam. Its celebration begins and ends with the sighting of the new moon, a symbol sacred to Islam and its faith-based cultures. Its dates vary year to year, but it is consistently beginning 11 days earlier than the previous year's.

Ramadan is one of the five pillars of Islam, calling Muslims to partake in the holy month of charity, faith, and forgiveness. From sunrise to sunset, Muslims abstain food and water, in addition to smoking, taking medication, chewing gum, or engaging

Muslims are encouraged to heed the daily prayers, pray the tasbeeh (Muslim rosary), and read the Quran, helping them grow faithfully and spiritually amongst themselves and Allah (Arabic word for God). It is encouraged not to curse, gossip, or use demeaning language, as it could "taint" the fast and its faithful intent.

Exceptions to fasting include pregnant women, travelers, the elderly, people with certain medical conditions (e.g., anemia, diabetes), and menstruating women. Students can also exempt, but it is their own choice, not the religion's.

In the pandemic

and difficult. Those who remain home have more time for rest, helping them recharge in-between daily prayers and the fast's opening. However, Ramadan is also a time for family gatherings, and opening fasts virtually is incomparable to pre-pandemic reunions.

For my grandparents Ramadan is "more than just a religious custom."

"It's a celebration of family unity. From sunrise til sunset we stand by each other, reminding ourselves the fasts' intent and its meaning, especially in these difficult times."

UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON-DOWNTOWN

Ramadan

What is Ramadan?
Ramadan is the 9th month of the Islamic calendar, observed by followers of the Muslim faith as a month of fasting, prayer, reflection and community.

Method of Ramadan
The time is meant for spiritual discipline, reflection of one's relationship with God, extra prayer, increased charity, and intense study of the Quran.

The Celebration of Ramadan
Muslims fast all day and eat and drink at night. At the end of Ramadan there's a 3 day feast called Eid al-Fitr, or the Festival of the Breaking of the Fast.

Be Considerate to Muslim Loved Ones
If you want to wish someone a happy Ramadan, you can say "Ramadan kareem" or "Ramadan mubarak" ("have a generous/blessed Ramadan")

Karina Rodarte Alvarez

SGA candidates debate virtually

By Shaheryar Khan

On April 22, UHD held a virtual, public forum debate open to all Gators. The debate was hosted by the Student Government Association to assess the candidates for the next president and vice president of the SGA.

As stated by the SGA, the president and vice president run as a paired ticket. For the 2021-2022 school year, the president and vice president candidates are Shamika Jefferson and Michelle Duvall as one pair, and Riley Owens and Lorena Gutierrez as another pair.

The debate was co-moderated by Camila Sandoval Serrano, president of the American Marketing Association, SGA director of External Affairs, and chair member of the Council of Organizations and Ebuka Ezike, Gator Crew worker and chair member of

the Council of Organizations.

Shamika Jefferson was asked why she is a good candidate for the presidency.

Jefferson stated, “I want to be the voice of all students and make a change because I talked to several people about different things that they want to make changes to [around campus]. I like to hear everybody’s opinions. I want to run for this [SGA] and try to see if I can make a change, make everyone happy, and hear everybody’s voice.”

Jefferson elaborated stating that she wants to use her experience as president of the National Association of Black Accountants to help her with the SGA presidency.

“Being the founder of NABA really taught me about UHD in general and how to reach out to students,” she said.

Michelle Duvall is Jefferson’s running mate as vice president and issued this statement when asked about why she would be fit for the role.

“I want to run because I want to bridge that gap between the resources that we do have at UHD and getting a message out to the students,” Duval said. “There are a lot of things that we have that a lot of people just don’t know about and also, I also want to increase civic engagement.”

Riley Owens is also running as president of the SGA.

When asked why he decided to run, he stated, “Since I am a peer mentor, most of the students were having issues like not having the college experience that they wanted,” Owens said. “I want to make sure that with this up-and-coming year, with everyone

getting back together on campus, people can get the college experience they wanted. They feel included, no matter who they are, what gender, and what race. It is all about inclusion.”

Being a peer mentor gave Owens the opportunity to further understand what it means to be a UHD student, as he worked one-on-one with many new Gators.

Lorena Gutierrez is Owens’s running mate for the SGA vice president spot. Gutierrez described why she would be fit for the job.

“As Riley said, we’re here to include the students, to make UHD home again, to help them transition from the usual online classes into coming to the university [in person].”

After the debate, Owens and Gutierrez expressed their motivation for

running further.

“As peer mentors we know what the students want due to interacting with them, on a daily basis, no matter the college but one of the main concerns this past year was their college experience.”

Both sides mainly wanted to address the resources available to UHD students. Specifically, they wanted to address how there are a number of resources available to Gators, but those resources are often underutilized because of the lack of engagement.

It was quite prevalent that both parties wanted to win the Gators’ votes, but at the same time, there was a constant civility through the entirety of the debate. Both parties were respectable of one another and gave each other credit where credit was due.

It only got heated once Jefferson brought light to her credentials with the Marilyn Davies

College of Business. Owens said that the business school has the habit of branching themselves away from the rest of the university. Duvall rebutted Owen’s claim on behalf of her and Jefferson stating that she is from the College of Humanities and Social Sciences and Jefferson is from the Marilyn Davies College of Business. By stating this, Duvall wanted the opposite party to know that her and Jefferson wanted to build the bridge to connect the rest of UHD. It is vital to mention that Owens and Gutierrez are from CHSS and MDCOB, respectively.

Hosting virtual SGA campaigns is a foreign concept to most, but both parties shared their positive attitudes going forward as Gators prepare to return to campus and go back to “normal.”

Results will be announced after the voting period of April 26-30.



SGA candidates Lorena Gutierrez (left) and Riley Owens (right) run for vice president and president respectively. Photo courtesy of @uhd.rileylorana.sga on Instagram.



SGA candidates Shamika Jefferson (left) and Michelle Duvall (right) run for president and vice president respectively. Photo courtesy of @sgauhd_voteshamika_michelle on Instagram.

Students discuss gender constructs at annual CHSS conference

By Gean Garcia

On April 9, the College of Humanities & Social Services hosted UHD's fourteenth annual Gender Studies Conference on Zoom to explore students' research and communicate novel perspectives on gender. The conference illuminated the constructs of gender in society and proposed ways to invert those constructs. Students presented on topics ranging from gender norms in Shakespeare's "Twelfth Night" to the impact of settlement houses on immigrant women.

The conference included two fairytale-themed panels moderated by professor of English, Tammi Thomas, Ph.D. Both of these panels allowed for creative and experimental presentation of scholarly research – some students composed a video essay using music and fairytale images, while others rewrote

classic fairytales to illuminate and redefine gender norms.

The panels included two enlightening adaptations of "Little Red Riding Hood" including "Little Red Riding Whore" by Jaida Doll, and "The Wolf That Cried" by Eric Tat. Doll presented a video essay that analyzed "Little Red Riding Hood" through the lens of predatory behavior. She asked, "When will we stop blaming the victims of rape and go after the predators instead?"

Meanwhile, Tat brilliantly flipped the story of the original fairy tale by making the wolf a victim. In Tat's rendition, the wolf, Tucker, is presented as a sweet young wolf interested in music and art, not in hunting humans like his brothers. Tragically, Tucker's father reads Tucker's gentility as weakness, and the father calls Tucker a "faggot" in a cheeky

nod to toxic masculine culture. However, Tucker meets a beautiful young girl in the woods who makes herself readily available to him. But Little Red Riding Hood, referred to as "Red," traps Tucker in her room, burns his clothes, and rapes him. Dejected and forced to wear women's clothing, Tucker crawls home in shame. Upon arrival, his wolfish father completely dismisses him as a man and disowns him, implanting suicidal ideations in Tucker's mind. Rejected and ridiculed by his peers, Tucker kills himself because he feels he is worthless if he cannot be a "real man." Tat communicated the standards of masculinity and the devastating effects of those standards on men who don't seem to "measure up."

Other well-researched presentations included two analyses of rape culture through the lens of "Sleeping Beauty," entitled "Another Eternal Slumber" and

"The Transformation of Sleeping Beauty's Bed in the Light of Consent" both by Katt Pittard. Pittard concluded that for a young woman, it is better to be left asleep forever than to be taken advantage of by the prince women are conditioned to desire.

In Mariey Garcia's presentation, "Caramela: Correcting the Damage of Snow White," Garcia touches on the intersectionality of gender and race. In her revised tale, a young brown girl, Caramela, goes through great lengths to look like her whiter cousin Blanca. Caramela bleaches her skin, hair, and she spends oodles of time in the gym to remain "the fittest of them all." However, it turns out that the fabled pale princess, Blanca, wants to look more like Caramela. Garcia's communicated that "everyone always feels like something is missing."

Interestingly, many presenters decided to look at gender through a fairytale

lens, but each presenter brought something new to the table. Each presentation illuminated different aspects of gender that we often take for granted. Other presenters included Susie Herndon, Anita Goolcharan and Emomi Fitz-Bowie who illuminated various historical perspectives on gender in a panel moderated by associate professor of history, Teresa Case, Ph.D.

In a panel moderated by assistant professor of health and behavioral science, Shahnjaya Connors, Ph.D., student presenter, Jessica Love discussed struggles for gender equality in political legislation and law enforcement.

Other presenters including Chase Hodgeson, Leah Williams, Rachel Leigh and Jordynn Godfrey illuminated feminine gender roles in cinematic films in a panel moderated by professor of English, Johanna Schmertz, Ph.D.

The final

panel shifted from academic research to creative writing and was moderated by associate professor of English, Katharine Jager, Ph.D. The presenters, Nampie Kamara, Rachel Leigh and Ahsanul Haque voiced gender diversity and the intersectionality of gender identities.

This year's Gender Studies Conference also included special guest, Teri Greeves, a Native American beadwork artist. Greeves' presentation, "The Hearts of our People," honored Native American women artists and recognized them as valid contributors to the culture and development of American art.

Next year's annual Gender Studies Conference is anticipated for spring 2022.

Bluebonnets bedeck campus, feed wild birds

By Sheryl Sellers

'Tis the season for the Texas state flower, the bluebonnet, to pop its bright blue plumes and adorn the state's highways and byways.

Although the bluebonnet adorns the countryside one does not need to travel far to view these and other colorful wildflowers. The south side of the Sciences and Technology Building

hosts a beautiful array of bluebonnets.

Native plants such as the Texas bluebonnet play an important role in feeding migratory birds that pass through the Buffalo Bayou and White Oak Bayou that connect with the campus.

Picking bluebonnets is tempting – but don't. Although myth abounds that it

is unlawful to pick the state flower, that is not true, unless of course you are on private property or in a state or federal parks. However, it is one of those little life rules: even if you can do something, it does not mean that you should. If the flowers are damaged, they will not grow again.

In tune with the rich history of

Texas, legends and myths abound surrounding the bluebonnet.

Some say that Spanish missionaries brought the bluebonnet seeds with them from Jerusalem, others say the missionaries brought the seeds from Spain. Either way, it is said that the missionaries planted the seeds in their missions where

they spread – like wildflowers.

Another legend states that a young girl was praying for rain during a long drought. She died as the rain began to fall. Bluebonnets grew where she laid.

And still another legend says that during a terrible plague the Aztec Indians prayed to their gods for relief. They

received a sign that only a "willing, sinless sacrifice" would cure the plague. A young maiden wearing a bluebonnet offered herself as sacrifice. A bluebonnet bloomed everywhere her blood spilled.

Continued on page 7

Ring ceremony recognizes graduates' accomplishments

By Sheryl Sellers

White and blue balloon archways with UHD proudly displayed in large silver letters lined the street. Faculty and staff flanked every archway with

arms waving and hands shaking balloons with fervor. Shouts of congratulations filled the air. This was the scene greeting seniors at the University of Hous-

ton-Downtown spring 2021 drive-through Ring Ceremony.

For me, the excitement, the frenzy was palpable. I could feel the genuine sense of good wishes

through the open car window.

As a first time in college student, I had no pre-conceived idea about the trappings of a ring ceremony. I have heard of

them, but that was all. Sometimes it's good to walk in clueless joy towards something meaningful. And to me, it was just that. A celebration of receiving my class ring, a visual symbol of my accomplishment. Frankly, it did not matter if it was a drive-through event, or an in-person event. I was thrilled.

To add to the excitement, the ring was presented by our new university president, Dr. Loren Blanchard. After all I had read and written about him, I was truly delighted to meet him mask to mask. And to have my picture taken with him by a professional photographer topped the moment.

But that was not all, Dr. Blanchard also presented each student with a university gift bag filled with red, white and blue popcorn, UHD

face mask and travel size hand sanitizer, and a rendition of our beloved mascot as a cute stuffed gator dressed in UHD garb.

The university did a terrific job decking out the celebration. The area was enhanced with a towering balloon gator and a larger-than-life blowup UHD ring. There was a significant array of photo opportunities, and many took advantage of the embellishments.

As we seniors prepare for our virtual graduation ceremony and contemplate the next phase of our lives, my hope is that we each remember these special moments that the university administration prepared for us. The joy is in the accomplishments and recognition of years well spent. Let's continue to find the joy.



Sheryl Sellers, shows off her graduation ring during the ceremony. Photo courtesy of Courtney Sellers.



Sheryl Sellers poses with granddaughter, Zoë, 9. Photo courtesy of Courtney Sellers.

Los Caimanes kicks off Arts & Communication Fest

By Emily Saldivar

Written by UHD alumnus, Eddie Gonzalez, "Calavera con Calavera" is an original piece that features music performed by UHD's official Mariachi "Los Caimanes" under direction of Jose Manuel Vazquez as well as choreography done by Danza Chikawa Dance. The recording of the virtual performance streamed April 12 to kick start UHD's 2021 Arts & Communication Festival.

Sponsored by HEB and the Houston Arts Alliance, this

Miller Dream Stream first aired last October in honor of "Dia de los Muertos" or Day of the Day. The Fundacion Latino Americana de Accion

Social teamed up with Grupo de Teatro Indigo to present the historical production as it is the first local production with Latino immigrant mem-

bers to be performed completely in Spanish (with English subtitles).

The story follows the Burgos family as they prepare

for Día de los Muertos. This tradition is celebrated by the family every year in Hacienda Calvario. However, as the main

character and father figure, Senor Burgo, states in the introduction, "Pay close attention because nothing is what it seems."

Continued on page 6



UHD Mariachi "Los Caimanes" perform at HTown Votes Live on Oct. 23, 2020. Photo courtesy of Marianna Galvan-Sainz.



UHD Mariachi "Los Caimanes" perform at Miller Outdoor Theatre on Oct. 30, 2020 in honor of "Dia de Los Muertos," Day of the Dead. Photo courtesy of Marianna Galvan-Sainz.

Los Caimanes honors Queen of Tejano

By Emily Saldivar

In honor of the “Queen of Tejano” Selena Quintanilla’s birthday, two members of UHD’s Mariachi “Los Caimanes,” Marianna Galvan-Sainz and Fabian Quijano, dedicated a cover of “I Could Fall in Love” to the singer.

The mariachi vocalist spotlighted in this cover is Galvan-Sainz, a bilingual education major at UHD. The producer, instrumentalist, and mariachi guitarist behind this tribute is

Quijano, a computer science major with a double minor in math and data science.

The tribute, now referred to as “The Selena Project” by both creators, was started last year during the beginning of quarantine with the intention of celebrating the late artist through her own music.

Galvan-Sainz and Quijano both expressed a personal connection to Selena that contributed to their reason for mak-

ing such a great tribute. After the positive response from their first Selena video a year ago, these Gators knew they needed to go bigger and better, as Galvan-Sainz said.

“What started as a small quarantine video birthday celebration became bigger with more tech and instruments,” she said. “Selena is someone whom we grew up listening to. Celebrating her birthday is important to us as musicians not only to remember her but

to remember and keep her legacy going.”

The song “I Could Fall in Love” was selected for a few reasons, according to Quijano. The most obvious being that it was the first single released from Selena’s album “Dreaming of You” and topped the charts upon release. The less obvious reason was that they hoped to reach a wider audience with their cover and decided an English song would contrast nicely with their previous selec-

tion of “Como La Flor.”

The entire process took about a month to complete. Fabian spoke about the upgrades that were added in hopes of not only making this video better than the last but challenging himself with the video and audio quality as well.

In preparation for recording, he listened to the selected song on repeat every day, listening to details and patterns to make sure the

difference in quality would be noticeable. He also extracted the drum sample from the original soundtrack as a reference but video-recorded the other instruments using his audio interface. The instrumentation alone took about three weeks to learn and record. The fourth week was when the vocal recording happened and the session lasted a few hours despite both students’ full-time school and work schedules. Even with the new and improved recordings, Quijano still worked to think of ways to improve what they already had.

“I drove home and thought of ways to make this tribute better than the last,” Quijano said. “I watched the music video for ‘I Could Fall in Love.’ It gave me the idea to have Selena shots from live performances and interviews. The following day, I started to plan out the tribute.”

Continued on page 7



UHD Mariachi “Los Caimanes” members, Fabian Quijano (guitar) and Marianna Galvan-Sainz (vocals) perform “I Could Fall in Love” as tribute to Selena. Photo courtesy of Marianna Galvan-Sainz.

Los Caimanes at Arts & Communication (continued)

As the play progressed, the characters explained not only why they celebrate this occasion but what each part of their celebrating means—the alters, the food eaten, the candles used, the symbolism in the marigolds, etc. Their explanations give meaning to the colorful decorations and purpose to the activities they partake in as a family. There is even an unexpect-

ed guest lurking in the background as the story unfolds. La Catrina (Death) has a terrifyingly beautiful presence that is meant to remind the audience of how beautiful life is and that it needs to be taken advantage of as it is fleeting.

This story about life, death, and the in-between is sure to captivate its audience with questions of mortality and a surprise ending that

you won’t see coming.

Mariachi Los Caimanes performed several traditional Mexican musical numbers. Mariachi Los Caimanes has earned local acclaim in a short amount of time. According to the mariachi Director Jose Manuel Vazquez, its mission is to create positive experiences through music while also honoring culture. This group of students has had to over-

come many obstacles such as balancing school life, work, family, and, more recently, a lack of full band rehearsals due to COVID-19. However, their success can be attributed to their resilience as they still managed to perform in this Day of the Dead production despite the hardships they faced.

Marianna Galvan-Sainz, vocalist from the UHD group, was very pleased

with her experience. “The overall experience performing with Danza Chikawa and Grupo Teatro Indigo was truly breathtaking,” Sainz said. “It was a very emotional experience. Remembering and even learning more about my culture made me realize how proud I am to be Mexican. It was not much of being able to perform with this amazing production or the fact that we were standing

on stage of the Miller Outdoor Theatre, but the fact that I was able to connect, relate, and remember past loved ones was a blessing. It truly made me appreciate my culture and traditional ten times more!”

“Calavera con Calavera” is currently available as a virtual performance via YouTube, Facebook, and the Miller Outdoor Theatre website.

New mural (continued)

“I love the combination of science and art always,” Morano said. “We can use facts... and science to inform us, but we already know that data does not move people, art moves people. In order to get people to move, they have to care.” The mural’s name embodies the synergy of the disciplines working together to teach appreciation of wildlife through art and how

people can “become part of the solution to creating a more environmentally-sound urban environment.” Morano envisions UHD becoming the next “mecca of urban ecology” by continuing to embrace sustainability in urban spaces.

“Anyone and everyone in our community... intersects with the endeavor of having a community that is in tune with

nature,” Houston Audubon’s director of conservation, Richard Gibbons, Ph.D., said during the panel. Planting native plants like hackberry trees, wax myrtle, etc. are “fantastic for wildlife.” He also called the audience to stop planting exotic, invasive species of plants that don’t feed local wildlife.

“If we have a community where birds can thrive,

people are also going to do better in that environment,” Gibbons said. “Nature is a perfect signal for whether or not we have a better environment.”

For more information on planting native plants to create bird-friendly gardens, visit Houston Audubon’s website under the tab “Bird Friendly Communities.”



2021 Faculty Awards

Outstanding Adjunct: Dr. Elias Keedy, Business

Outstanding Lecturers: Nancy Lopez, Lecturer of History

Excellence in Scholarly/Creative Activity: Dr. Edward Cueva, Professor of Humanities

Excellence in Service: Dr. Michael Cavanaugh, Associate Professor and Assistant Chair, Criminal Justice

Excellence in Teaching: Dr. Adriana Visbal Distinguished Faculty Award - Ryan Pepper, Mathematics and Statistics Department Chair and Professor

Faculty Development Leave Award Winners: Dr. Stephanie Babb, Associate Professor of Psychology; Dr. Ivan Gan, Assistant Professor Department of Arts and Communication; Dr. Michael Lemke, Assistant Professor Department of Social Sciences; Dr. Bonnie Lucero, Associate Professor Department of History; Humanities, and Languages; Daniel Pena, Assistant Professor of English; Dr. Leena Thacker-Kumar, Professor of Political Science

25 years of service: Dr. Jose Alvarez, Professor of History; Dr. Barbara Belbot, Professor in Department of Criminal Justice; Dr. Marie Bhattacharjee, Associate Professor Urban Education; Benny John, M.S., Lecturer; Dr. Karen Kaser, Program Director, Senior Lecturer Bachelor of Applied Arts and Sciences in Applied Administration Program; Dr. Kurt Stanberry, Professor of Business Law; Dr. M. Nell Sullivan, Professor of English

30 years years of service: Anna Rosenthal Simmons, M.S., M.B.A., Lecturer and Coordinator for the Center for Math and Statistics; Robert Wilson, M.Mus., Lecturer in Music

35 years years of service: Sangeeta Gad, M.S., Lecturer, Department of Math and Statistics; Dr. Rolando Pelaez, Professor of Finance

40 years years of service: Shohreh Hashemi, Associate Professor of Management Information Systems

By Sheryl Sellers

Gean Garcia

Los Caimanes honors (continued)

After exporting both the video and audio, a process that takes hours, the creation of the finished project took him about twelve hours altogether, from three in the afternoon to three in the morning. When he was able to share it with Galvan-Sainz, he was finally able to appreciate the product of their hard work.

“I took a breather and thought,

‘Wow, I can’t believe that I was able to produce such a video in a limited time. I’m sure Marianna [Galvan-Sainz] will be proud of the outcome,’ and she was.”

Both musicians describe Selena as more than a musician but rather an important part of their identity and a source of inspiration. Galvan-Sainz also finds the singer to be a source of motivation

that she shares with many other performers. “[Selena’s legacy is] a connection that bridges all, regardless of race, age, or culture.”

Quijano shares similar sentiments of the singer. “Selena was a beautiful soul, he said. “She was always full of laughter, love, kindness, and overall, a very talented musician. She is a huge inspiration to

me whenever I must break through boundaries regarding music and my identity.”

The birthday tribute of Selena Quintanilla’s song “I Could Fall in Love” performed by Marianna Galvan-Sainz and Fabian Quijano and dedicated to the original singer herself is available on the UHD Mariachi Los Caimanes page at @uhdmariachi.

Bluebonnets (continued)

This beautiful blue flower was also known by other names, the wolf flower, buffalo clover and “el conejo” in Spanish (the rabbit) so named because the flowers’ white spots on the blue flowers resembled a cottontail rabbit’s fluffy tush.

The name wolf flower came about because early settlers believed that the plants were robbing the soil of important nutrients.

Not quite. According to experts from Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service these bountiful blooms create their own fertilizer and provide nutrients. They are, however, toxic, so deer avoid them.

Naming the bluebonnet as the state flower dates to 1901. The idea for states to adopt a flower began at the 1893 World’s Fair in Chicago. A Texas state legislator wanted to

name the cotton boll, which he described as the “white rose of commerce.” Representative John Nance Garner desired the prickly pear cactus. Another legislator suggested the bluebonnet. But it was not until the Texas Chapter of the National Society of Colonial Dames who also vied for the bluebonnet sent for a picture. Only then did the group realize it was the flower they knew

as the wolf flower.

The scientific name for the bluebonnet is *Lupinus subcarnosus*. There are six other species of the flower. All are considered the Texas state flower.

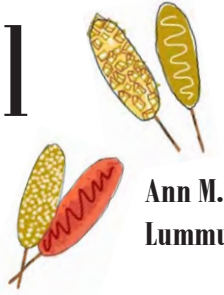
Author Jack Maguire wrote: “The blue bonnet is to Texas what the shamrock is to Ireland, the cherry blossom to Japan, the lily to France, the rose to England and the tulip to Holland.”



Two Hands Seoul Fresh Corn Dogs

By Ann M. Lummus

Ann M.
Lummus



Houston is known for its eclectic food venue, with the raised interest in finding unique meals. Two Hands Seoul Fresh Corn Dogs presents Houstonians with Korean corn dogs, also known as the Korean hot dog. These corn dogs are a street food of South Korea meant to be a snack but can also be eaten as a fast-food meal.

The pop culture of food is part of an experience made for platforms like Instagram and YouTube. The appeal of the food is that it can be eaten in the car, posted on Instagram

or used as content for a Mukbang – a viral video trend which broadcasts the subjects binge eating large amounts of Korean food.

Located in Chinatown, Two Hands Seoul Fresh Corn Dogs is a chain fast-food restaurant. With the convenience of an adjacent parking garage, Two Hands has accessible parking. There is often a line at Two Hands, as a lot of people visit to try the deep-fried cheese sticks for the first time.

The ambiance of the restaurant is not overwhelming, though there are few

eye-catching décors. This is because the focus of the restaurant is centered around the food, not necessarily the experience of the place.

Patrons can watch the staff make their corn dog through a glass division. And the aesthetic of the corn dog itself is artistic – the red, orange and gold colors of the food create an appetizing design, and the final product is well presented in a sturdy box.

The staff is welcoming and patient. Visitors need ample time to order because the menu offers 24 potential corn

dog concoctions. Two Hands offered seven customizable items like the Classic corn dog, the Two Hands special or a more unique option like the Injeolmi.

The Injeolmi corn dog is dusted with soybean powder and sugar drizzled in sweetened condensed milk. It is the sweetest option and tastes like a funnel cake with either cheese or hot dog inside. The crunchiness of the corn dog is even visible while it is being eaten. Biting into a crunchy, cheese filled “thing” on a stick was an interactive and fun food experience.

Instead of corn flour, Two Hands batters their dogs in flour and panko crumbs which gives a pleasing crunch. A twist to Two Hands’ menu allows customers the option of a half cheese/half hot dog filling. Sauces are also an option to consider – Two Hands’ options range from ketchup and mustard to spicy mayo as well as their house sauce dubbed “dirty sauce.”

Asie from the Korean corn dogs, the menu also offers tater tots sprinkled with Korean spices, house made slushies, and an underground soda brand called

Stubborn. One of the Stubborn handcrafted sodas, Citrus Hibiscus Orange, is not as sweet as the standard sodas, but is a light refreshing drink. Tart but sweet, the lemonade slushie counters the heaviness of the fried food.

Two Hands is a novel experience for those seeking creative, Asian-inspired gourmet corn dogs. For more information and to view the full menu visit Two Hands’ website at twohandsus.com



Two Hands serves a variety of delicious and aesthetically pleasing Asian-inspired corn dogs. Photo credit: Ann M. Lummus.



Two Hands staff is welcoming and patient - thankfully so, because visitors will need plenty of time to choose one of the 24 customizable corn dog options. Photo credit: Ann M. Lummus.

New upscale housing concept welcomes residents

By Sheryl Sellers

There are several housing options available in Houston - apartments, lofts, duplexes, condominiums, townhouses and single-family homes. The city welcomes a new concept, co-housing, which is emerging east of downtown.

The idea originated in Denmark in the late 1960s. Two Americans studying in the country were enamored with the neighborly set-up and brought the notion back to the United States. Currently, there are 148 co-housing communities in the U.S. and another 17 are under construction.

Co-housing is an intentional community integrating concept with a neighborly atmosphere. The concept is built

around getting to know and mingling with other residents. For instance, garages and parking spaces are positioned such that one must walk through the community to interact with neighbors and integrate into the community.

The urban village includes a 5,600-square-foot common house where community meals can be served. It also boasts a working space and two guest bedrooms. Among the amenities is a bike repair shop, a wood-working shop, an art shop, playroom for children and a rooftop terrace. The plan also includes a community garden and the possibility of a swimming pool. It will also entail a Homeowners Association.

The co-housing project in Houston is located east of downtown on Delmar Street, near parks, bike paths and the rail system, minutes from Minute Maid Park and the theatre

district. Kathleen English and her firm, English + Associates, are designing the green property with the assistance of Caddis Collaborative of Boulder, CO. Currently 17 of the

proposed 33 condominiums have been sold. To include as many priorities of residents as possible, each are involved in the planning process.

The rationale of the concept is to

have “more for less.” The goal is also to reflect diversity, and the ability to learn from others while building community.



An aerial rendering of Cohousing Houston at 115 Lennox Ave. which is scheduled to be completed in the fall of 2022.

Starbucks debuts reusable-cups program

By Madiha Hussain

Starbucks has recently introduced a reusable-cups program in an effort to be more environmentally conscious. Starbucks' Chief Sustainability Officer Michael Kobori said that the company introduced the program to reduce half its waste by 2030.

The program is currently limited to Seattle and South Korea. From March 30 to May 31, customers can utilize this program at select Starbucks location.

Customers would have to order any drink they would like with a reusable cup, paying

an extra \$1 that will be refunded once the cup is returned. After the customer finishes enjoying their drink, they can return the cup through the drive-thru, a contactless kiosk located within the store's lobby, or an at-home pick-up. The customer can then redeem a \$1 Starbucks credit and 10 Bonus Stars through the app.

The reusable cup is then thoroughly sanitized through GOBox. GOBox is a service provider that specializes in zero-waste takeout by providing sturdy containers and cups. GOBox handles the

Starbucks cups and then disinfects them within 48 hours after their collection.

Starbucks has yet to announce whether their reusable cups program will become a permanent practice in America. However, the company has already announced its plan to phase out all single-use cups by 2025 in South Korea.

Starbucks currently has other eco-friendly policies that are available nationwide. Starbucks sells reusable mugs and thermoses that customers can bring in from home. The company also offers a

discount to customers that bring in their own containers.

Although reusable cups may sound like a displeasing idea during the COVID-19 pandemic, the concept of reusing containers and cups

is a process that many restaurants employ. Many sit-down restaurants wash plates, forks, knives, spoons, and cups after each customer.

GOBox also points out on their website that dispos-

able products do not even go through a sanitization process when produced on a massive scale. Starbucks also assures that all sanitization processes are in accordance with national health guidelines.



A Starbucks customer returns reusable cup in contactless kiosk through Starbucks' reusable-cup program offered in participating stores in Seattle, Washington. Image courtesy of Starbucks.

CDC updates cleaning guidelines

By Karina Rodarte Alvarez

In late April, Apple reinstated Parler in its App Store, nearly four months after its removal following the deadly Capitol Insurrection riots.

Known for its usage among conservative and right-wing users, Parler dedicates itself as “the world’s premiere free speech platform,” free of censorship and other “silencing” methods used on other social applications.

According to NPR, a letter addressed to Republican Sen. Mike Lee from Utah and Republican Rep. Ken Buck from Colorado, stated that Apple’s app review team found “a significant number” of Parler posts that violated Apple policies governing offensive or discriminatory user-generated content, including those that “encouraged violence, denigrated various ethnic groups, races and religions, glorified Nazism, and called for violence.”

Upon its return, its developers promise to enact newer safeguards, hoping to prevent another violent uprising or other displays of physical harm.

Per this letter, Parler has proposed future updates to its platform and moderation practices. According to Timothy Powderly, Apple’s senior director of government affairs for America, “Parler has proposed updates to its app and the app’s content moderation practices, and the App

Review Team has informed Parler as of April 14, 2021, that its proposed updated app will be approved for reinstatement to the App Store.”

Additionally, the social platform will implement new measures that will remove posts without

violating the First Amendment’s implied “protected-speech” while maintaining no change to broader policies—these changes will only apply to its mobile app. Unviewable offensive posts will still be available for users on web or Android-based

devices.

“Parler has and will always be a free and open forum where users could engage in the free exchange of ideas in the full spirit of the First Amendment to the United States Constitution,” Parler’s interim CEO

Mark Meckler said.

“We have worked to put in place systems that will better detect unlawful speech and allow users to filter content undesirable to them while maintaining our strict prohibition against content moderation based on viewpoint.”

Meckler credited Buck and Lee, stating that their writing to Apple helped negotiate the app’s relaunch to the platform. In response, Buck celebrated tweeting “a huge win for free speech,” with Lee writing, “Conservative speech must not be silenced.”

#UHDStopTheSpread

How to clean a facility

Source: CDC

How often to clean

All buildings should be cleaned at least once daily. High traffic areas should be cleaned more frequently.



Protect cleaning staff

All staff should be wearing gloves and masks while cleaning public areas that could have potentially been infected by the virus.



Use public utilities safely

Communal devices such as touchscreen laptops, printers, and more should be cleaned after each use.



Extra precautions

If a building has elderly or immune-compromised people entering, the building should be disinfected more often.

Wash your hands.

The best way to prevent infection via surface is to wash your hands thoroughly with soap multiple times a day.



Student Prevention

It is important to wear a mask and avoid skin-to-skin contact with strangers. It is recommended to carry a portable hand sanitizer and avoid borrowing pens and paper that others touched.



Seek medical advice if:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath
- Fatigue
- Muscle/body ache
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea



Source • Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (cdc.gov)

Karina Rodarte Alvarez

Parler returns to Apple app store

By Aansa Usmani

In late April, Apple reinstated Parler in its App Store, nearly four months after its removal following the deadly Capitol Insurrection riots.

Known for its usage among conservative and right-wing users, Parler describes itself as “the world’s premiere free speech platform,” free of censorship and other “silencing” methods used on other social applications.

According to NPR, a letter addressed to Republican Sen. Mike Lee from Utah and Republican Rep. Ken Buck from

Colorado, stated that Apple’s app review team found “a significant number” of Parler posts that violated Apple policies governing offensive or discriminatory user-generated content, including those that “encouraged violence, denigrated various ethnic groups, races and religions, glorified Nazism, and called for violence.”

Upon its return, its developers promise to enact newer safeguards, hoping to prevent another violent uprising or other displays of physical harm.

Per this letter,

Parler has proposed future updates to its platform and moderation practices. According to Timothy Powderly, Apple’s senior director of government affairs for America, “Parler has proposed updates to its app and the app’s content moderation practices, and the App Review Team has informed Parler as of April 14, 2021, that its proposed updated app will be approved for reinstatement to the App Store.”

Additionally, the social platform will implement new measures that will remove posts without

violating the First Amendment’s implied “protected-speech” while maintaining no change to broader policies—these changes will only apply to its mobile app. Unviewable offensive posts will still be available for users on web or Android-based devices.

“Parler has and will always be a free and open forum where users could engage in the free exchange of ideas in the full spirit of the First Amendment to the United States Constitution,” Parler’s interim CEO Mark Meckler said.

“We have worked to put in place systems that will better detect unlawful speech and allow users to filter content undesirable to them while maintaining our strict prohibition against content moderation based on viewpoint.”

Meckler credited Buck and

Lee, stating that their writing to Apple helped negotiate the app’s relaunch to the platform. In response, Buck celebrated tweeting “a huge win for free speech,” with Lee writing, “Conservative speech must not be silenced.”



Parler describes itself as “the world’s premiere free speech platform,” free of censorship and other “silencing” methods used on other social applications. Photo courtesy of BBC.com

Nine killed in grisly Indianapolis FedEx shooting

By Karina Rodarte Alvarez

On April 15, Brandon Hole, 19, murdered eight people were subsequently took his own life. The mass shooting occurred in Indianapolis at a FedEx Ground Facility where Hole was formerly employed until he was fired in October 2020.

According to witnesses and evidence, the shooting lasted four minutes as Hole fired at employ-

ees with a legally purchased AR-15 rifle in the parking lot before he charged the front entrance. Hole took his life shortly before law enforcement arrived at the scene. Hole had two rifles in his possession and was likely to continue his rampage. The employees were unable to contact help because of the company’s ban on personal cell phones while working.

Hole killed eight people in his rampage - Matthew R. Alexander, 32; Samaria Blackwell, 19; Amarjeet Johal, 66; Jasvinder Kaur, 50; Jaswinder Singh, 68; Amarjit Sekhon, 48; Karli Smith, 19; and John Weisert, 74. Hole also injured four others who are currently recovering.

Hole was a fan of ‘My Little Pony: Friendship is Magic’ and a few minutes

before the shooting, posted “I hope that I can be with Applejack (pony character from the show) in the afterlife, my life has no meaning without her.”

In March 2020, Hole’s mother alerted the authorities that her son intended to die by suicide by police officer. Hole was taken into custody at a mental health facility and police claimed that his computer had white

supremacist websites on it.

According to Indiana’s “red flag law,” Hole was supposed to be taken to court after his shotgun confiscation and banned from purchasing firearms for six months, but police did not schedule the court hearing. Hole bought the two rifles he used in the mass shooting four to six months after his first shotgun was confiscated.

While there is no clear motive, many doubt that the shooting was random. Many assume the crime was racially motivated, because four of those killed were of Indian descent. More investigation is being launched into this claim, and the FedEx mass shooting is considered the second deadliest of 2021 so far.

Former VP, Walter Mondale dies at 93

By Aansa Usmani

Tragedy struck On April 19, former Vice President Walter Mondale, 93, died at his home. Known for serving under President Carter and a failed presidential run in 1984, Mondale’s life of public service transcends politics through his contin-

uous advocacy of progressive causes, such as women’s rights, civil rights, and minority groups.

Born on Jan. 5, 1928, in Ceylon, southern Minnesota, to farming, Methodist parents, father Rev. Theodore S. Mondale, and mother, Claribel

Mondale. To family members, Mondale was known as Fritz, named after his paternal great-grandfather, Frederick “Fritz” Mundal, who immigrated to the States from Norway in the mid-1850s. His rural upbringing instilled lessons in

humility, honesty, and open-mindedness, qualities that would influence his political and public career.

Mondale was an average student but had an enthusiasm for sports, including varsity high school football. After high school, Mondale

briefly attended Macalester College, later transferring to the University of Minnesota, where he would graduate cum laude in political science in 1951.

Upon graduation, Mondale served in the Army for two years, then promptly

returning to his alma mater for law school. There, Mondale married Joan Adams and had two sons and a daughter, radio personality Eleanor Mondale Poling, who passed in 2011 from brain cancer. lifelong political advisors and friends.

Continued on page 12

Former VP (continued)

Per The New York Times, Mondale grew deeper into his political views during college, including becoming a leader of Americans for Democratic Action, a liberal advocacy group led by college students and young adults. Additionally, Mondale joined the Minnesota Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party, hoping to oust communism ideals and its sympathizers. There, Mondale met Hubert Humphrey, then mayor of Minneapolis, becoming lifelong political advisors and friends.

In turn, Mondale volunteered for Humphrey's first bid for the Senate, winning successfully from 1949 to 1964, with a brief stint from 1971 to 1978. Humphrey's successes inspired young Mondale to run for higher office.

by then-Governor, Orville L. Freeman, a previous partner in his law firm. According to The New York Times, Mondale and other state attorneys general signed a brief that persuaded the federal Supreme Court to "uphold the right of counsel for indigent defendants in the landmark case, *Gideon v. Wainwright* (1963)."

The following year, Mondale was appointed as head of the Democratic party's credentials committee, ahead of the 1964 presidential election. His prominent role helped broker a deal with Sen. Humphrey between segregated and integrated delegate factions from Mississippi. This would ban the segregation of future delegate factions, combining the civil rights movement in the political scene.

appointing Mondale to his former Senate seat. Before his swearing-in ceremony, Mondale had an emergency appendectomy and would be sworn in during his stay at the Bethesda Naval Medical Chamber.

In the Senate chamber, Mondale signed into law the Voting Rights Act of 1965, alongside supporting fair housing laws, expansions into "education, childcare, health care, jobs... and consumer protection." Mondale's proudest legislative achievement would be cutting up the Senate filibuster, "with 60 votes, under a rule change, rather than a two-thirds vote."

In the 1970s, Mondale floated potentially running for president, writing and publishing a campaign book in 1975, "The Account-

Nixon's foreign and domestic policy agenda. However, Mondale would change his mind stating, he lacked "an overwhelming desire to be president." This comment would later haunt him, especially during his 1984 presidential bid against then-incumbent President Ronald Reagan.

In 1976, then-Georgia Governor Jimmy Carter tapped Mondale to become his running mate, hoping to bring progressive voters to his side. Mondale wanted to reform the vice-presidential role as more policy-based than ceremonious.

After winning the presidential election, Mondale's worldview, stemming from previous progressive activism, influenced his vice-presidential role, such as advocating for "boat refugees" from the Vietnam War to ratifying the Panama Canal treaty and Middle East peace negotiations.

Mondale's views would contradict Carter's views, such as handling the 1979 unemployment era. Carter favored a fiscal, stricter monetary policy, hoping to control inflation. However, in the summer of 1979, double-digit unemployment rates and the rising oil prices would contribute to Carter's loss to Reagan in the 1980 election.

At the time, Mondale advised Carter to further analyze and find solutions instead of having a speech or a public forum. Disregarding the

advice, Carter instead addressed Americans with apparent emotion and concern for the nation's future. Mondale's fury almost tempted him to have a rebuttal speech, arguing that "the president had succumbed to psychobabble from an inexperienced aide."

In the 1980s, Mondale eyed another presidential run, beginning his campaign almost immediately after the 1980 election, having aides wear "Mondale in '84" pins to boost momentum. Mondale tapped Rep. Geraldine Ferraro of New York, making her the first woman in modern history to help lead a presidential ticket.

Mondale's campaign raised concerns over Reagan's age, believing that it could impact his ability to run the country. In response, Reagan stated, "I want you to know that also I will not make age an issue of this campaign. I am not going to exploit, for political purposes, my opponent's youth and inexperience." Mondale, 59 at the time, believed that moment was when he knew his campaign was dead.

On election night, Reagan won re-election by a landslide, winning 525 to Mondale's small number of 13. After losing the election, Mondale returned to Minnesota, practicing law and teaching at the Hubert H. Institute of Public Affairs at the University of Minnesota.

In 1992, President Clinton assigned

Mondale to Japan as a U.S. ambassador, lasting until December 1996. In Japan, he created an agreement to subsidize and relocate American military bases after the abduction and rape of a minor by three American servicemen. Additionally, in 1998, Mondale was sent as a special envoy to economically troubled Indonesia, using his political knowledge and negotiation tactics to benefit the Indonesians.

Since retiring from public office, Mondale continued to champion and advocate for progressive causes from his youth. In his 2010 memoir, Mondale believed that the country will not heed his ideals of "expanded government and social process."

"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith." He hoped that these words would inspire future generations of college students, young adults, and politicians, believing that these ideals are essential in succeeding in America.

In a farewell email to his former staff and team, Mondale writes, "Well, my time has come. I am eager to rejoin Joan and Eleanor. Before I go, I wanted to let you know how much you mean to me. Never has a public servant had a better group of people working at their side! Together we have accomplished so much, and I know you will keep up the good fight."



Walter Mondale (right) pictured with President Carter (left) at the Democratic National Convention after securing the 1976 presidential nomination. Image courtesy of Hulton Archive / Getty Images.

In 1960, Mondale was appointed as Minnesota's state attorney general

Sen. Humphrey would later become then-President Johnson's vice president,

ability of Power: Toward a Responsible Presidency," criticizing then-President

Japan plans to dump radioactive water into ocean

By Jema Pantoja

On April 13, the Japanese government announced that they will gradually start releasing radioactive water from the Fukushima nuclear plant into the Pacific Ocean. The radioactive water is a result from the disastrous 2011 earthquake and tsunami that damaged Fukushima nuclear plant. It is expected that the current water tanks, stored over the past 10 years, will run out next year.

Despite much opposition from neighboring countries such as China and South Korea, the Japanese government believes it is the only option to rid of the wastewater. Environmentalists, the UN, and local fishing industries have expressed concerns on what the release of the radioactive water could have on marine life. Prime Minister

Yoshihide Suga said during the April 13 cabinet meeting that disposing the radioactive water from the nuclear plant was “a problem that cannot be avoided” and the only realistic option.

According to scientists, the water will be treated and diluted so radiation levels are low enough to make the water safe to drink. Currently, the radioactive water is treated in a complex filtration process that removes most of the radioactive elements; however, some remain such as tritium, which is harmful to humans in large doses. The water is then kept in huge tanks, but the tanks are running out of space. It is reported that about 1.3 million tons of radioactive water are currently stored in these tanks.

Countries such as China and South Korea oppose

the decision. Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian has urged Japan to “act in a responsible manner” and South Korea’s foreign minister Chung Eui-yong has expressed “serious regret.” However, the U.S. supports Japan’s decision, stating that it seems Japan has “adopted

an approach in accordance with globally accepted nuclear safety standards.” Scientists have said that the effects of releasing the radioactive water could last over 100 years, posing a risk to humans and the environment.

Brent Heuser of the University of Illinois, professor of

nuclear, plasma and radiological engineering, is worried about other issues contributing to ocean pollution.

“I would say to people who are concerned about this going into the ocean,” Heuser said. “We dump 8 tons of plastics in the ocean, pregnant women

are not supposed to eat tuna because of mercury poisoning, microplastic is in the marine food chain — this is what we should be worried about.”

Japan has set to gradually release the wastewater by 2022.



The Japanese government said about 1.3 million tons of radioactive water from damaged nuclear plant in Fukushima are set to gradually be released into Pacific Ocean by 2022. Photo courtesy of The New York Times.

Kobe Bryant’s widow sues LASD

By Sheila Delgado Rey

On April 13, the Japanese government announced that they will gradually start releasing radioactive water from the Fukushima nuclear plant into the Pacific Ocean. The radioactive water is a result from the disastrous 2011 earthquake and tsunami that damaged Fukushima nuclear plant. It is expected that the current water tanks, stored over the past 10 years, will run out next year.

Despite much opposition from

neighboring countries such as China and South Korea, the Japanese government believes it is the only option to rid of the wastewater. Environmentalists, the UN, and local fishing industries have expressed concerns on what the release of the radioactive water could have on marine life. Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga said during the April 13 cabinet meeting that disposing the radioactive water from the nuclear plant was “a problem that cannot

be avoided” and the only realistic option.

According to scientists, the water will be treated and diluted so radiation levels are low enough to make the water safe to drink. Currently, the radioactive water is treated in a complex filtration process that removes most of the radioactive elements; however, some remain such as tritium, which is harmful to humans in large doses. The water is then kept in huge tanks, but the tanks are running out

of space. It is reported that about 1.3 million tons of radioactive water are currently stored in these tanks.

Countries such as China and South Korea oppose the decision. Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian has urged Japan to “act in a responsible manner” and South Korea’s foreign minister Chung Eui-yong has expressed “serious regret.” However, the U.S. supports Japan’s decision, stating that it seems Japan has “adopted

an approach in accordance with globally accepted nuclear safety standards.” Scientists have said that the effects of releasing the radioactive water could last over 100 years, posing a risk to humans and the environment.

Brent Heuser of the University of Illinois, professor of nuclear, plasma and radiological engineering, is worried about other issues contributing to ocean pollution.

“I would say to people who

are concerned about this going into the ocean,” Heuser said. “We dump 8 tons of plastics in the ocean, pregnant women are not supposed to eat tuna because of mercury poisoning, microplastic is in the marine food chain — this is what we should be worried about.”

Japan has set to gradually release the wastewater by 2022.

Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, dies at 99

By Savannah Mims

Tragedy struck the Royal Family April 9. Queen Elizabeth II's husband, Prince Philip Mountbatten, known as The Duke of Edinburgh, died peacefully at age 99.

Philip was born June 10, 1921, on the Greek island of Corfu, Prince Andrew of Greece's only son. In 1947, Philip renounced his Greek and Danish royal titles after becoming a neutralized British subject. Subsequently, he adopted the taking the Mountbatten last name, making him eligible to wed then-Princess Elizabeth, who he met at his cousin's wedding in 1934.

The couple's engagement was announced July 9, 1947, and their wedding was held Nov. 20, 1947. Philip and Elizabeth had four children, beginning with Prince Charles, the Prince of

Wales (1948), Princess Anne, Princess Royal (1950), Prince Andrew (1960), and Prince Edward (1964), the latter two were the first children born from a reigning monarch since Queen Victoria.

Philip was granted the title of "Prince" Feb. 22, 1957, after the Queen ascended the throne. From then on, he was His Royal Highness Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh.

The Duke and the Queen had many

grandchildren, including Zara Phillips, Prince William Prince Henry of Wales (better known as Prince Harry), Princess Beatrice and Princess Eugenie of York, The Lady Louise Windsor, and Viscount Severn. In addition, he also had many great-grandchildren, Savannah Phillips, Isla Phillips, George, Princess Charlotte, Prince Louis, Mia Tindall, Lena Tindall, Lucas Tindall, Archie Mountbatten-Windsor, and August

Brooksbank.

The Duke became the longest-serving British Consort in 2009, an honor previously held by Queen Charlotte, the Queen Consort to George III. In 2017, the Duke retired from public life and royal appearances, with a temporary break in 2018 to attend the wedding of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle, the former Duke and Duchess of Sussex.

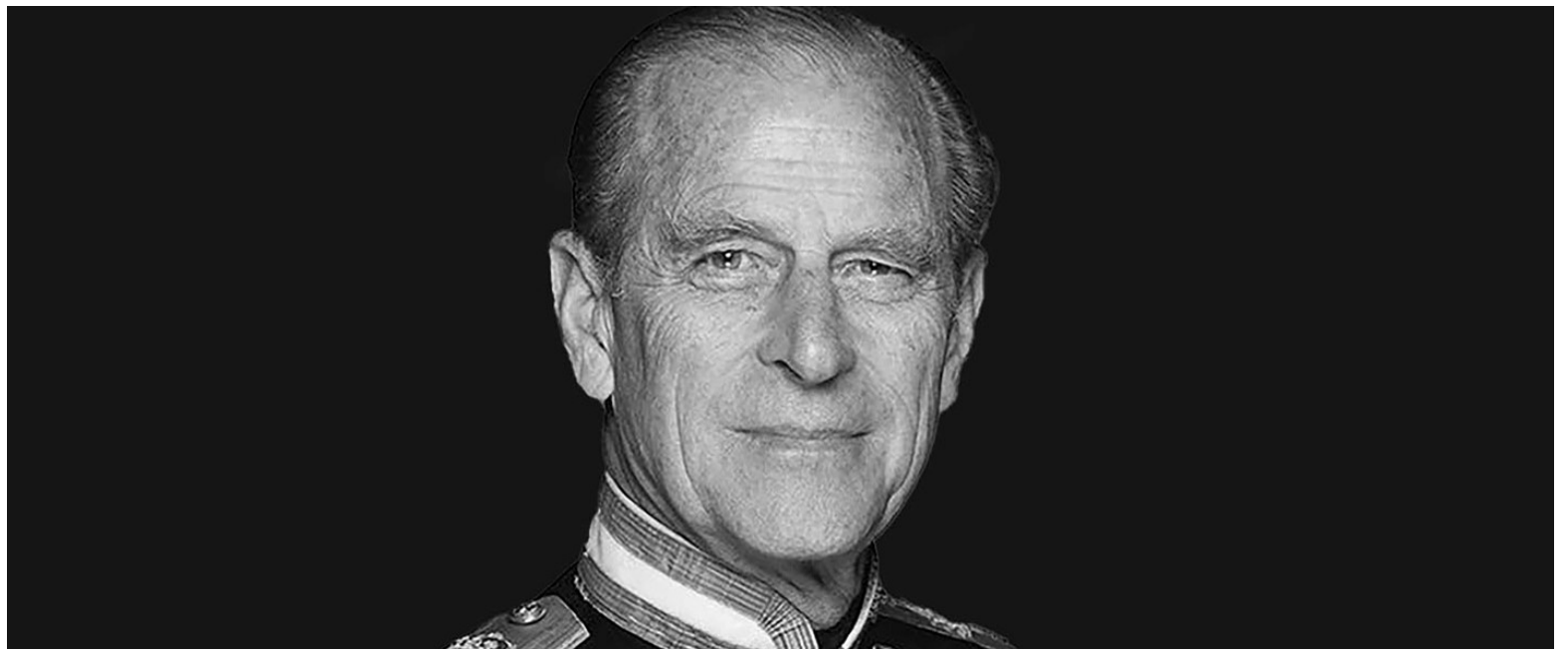
Two months short of his 100th

birthday, the Duke passed away April 9. On April 17, the Duke was laid to rest in a "Ceremonial Royal Funeral" identical to the the Queen Mother's funeral in 2002. The Dean of Windsor conducted the funeral service, and the Archbishop of Canterbury gave a blessing.

Afterwards, the Duke's coffin was taken from the Quadrangle of Windsor and transported by customized a Range Rover, to St. George's Chapel. Thirty mem-

bers of the Royal Family walked behind the coffin, to a 50-minute funeral service conducted by the Dean of Windsor.

At the service, the Royal Family members listened to hymns chosen by the Duke, and saw his coffin being lowered into the Royal Vault while the British National Anthem "God Save The Queen" was sung.



Prince Phillip, Duke of Eidinburgh, passes at 99. Image courtesy of Royal.uk

Officer caught threatening innocent biracial army lieutenant

By Karina Rodarte Alvarez

On Dec. 5 2020, police officers threatened to execute a Black Army officer during a traffic stop in Windsor, Virginia. Army 2nd Lt. Caron Nazario, who is Black and Latino, was stopped in uniform driving a new Tahoe. Nazario admitted that he did not immediately pull over and drove an additional minute and a half to a nearby well-lit gas station for his own safety. Officer Gutierrez and Of-

ficer Crocker pulled guns on Nazario once he stopped and accused him of driving without license plates although Nazario's new vehicle tag was clearly visible.

When Nazario asked officers why he was pulled over, Gutierrez became agitated and replied: "What's going on? You're fixing to ride the lightning, son." This saying is a common expression for death

by electrocution via electric chair. Later, Nazario says that he was worried about exiting his vehicle, telling the officers he was "honestly afraid to get out," and Gutierrez retorted with a "yeah, you should be!"

Nazario was pepper-sprayed multiple times causing immediate pain, damage to his vehicle, and choked Nazario's dog that was also in the car at the time.

Gutierrez then kneed and blinded Nazario by pepper spray onto the ground to handcuff him face-down.

After the officers found no reason to charge Nazario during the traffic stop, they threatened that they would criminally charge Nazario if he reported them. They also warned him to "chill and let this go" and to not complain about their treatment of him or the vehicle damage or the need-

less force and pepper spray.

Gutierrez was initially disciplined after an internal review of the bodycam footage. After the video footage went viral, Gutierrez was fired. The police chief elected not to fire Crocker, who was a newcomer to the force and still training. Chief Riddle says that he hopes the moment will be a lesson for Crocker on what not to do during a traffic stop.

Nazario is suing the two Virginia officers seeking over \$1 million in damages and violation of his rights. The officers will be facing claims of unlawful seizure, excessive force, illegal search, violation of Nazario's first amendment right, and common law assault, battery, and threats of false imprisonment.

George Floyd's attacker found guilty

By Karina Rodarte Alvarez

Former Minneapolis police officer, Derek Chauvin, 45, was found guilty of all three charges concerning the death of George Floyd, 46. Floyd's tragic death was the catalyst to the resurgence of the present-day civil rights movement, Black Lives Matter, which protested the excessive use of force and police brutality on Black people throughout the pandemic summer of 2020.

In startling footage that was leaked by a 17-year-old bystander last spring, Chauvin knelt on Floyd's neck for over nine minutes after Floyd allegedly used a counterfeit twenty-dollar bill. Prior to this, Floyd was handcuffed and lying face down, pleading to Chauvin, "I can't breathe." The two other police officers also pinned down Floyd, and a fourth officer prevented bystanders from interfering.

Dr. Martin Tobin, a pulmonologist who studies the physiology of breathing, confirmed that Floyd died due to low oxygen caused by Chauvin's knee on his neck. Dr. Jonathan Rich, a Chicago-based cardiologist, also agreed, stating that Floyd passed due to cardiopulmonary arrest caused by positional asphyxiation. The medical examiner concurred with both experts, saying that while Floyd had traces of fentanyl and heart disease, it was

not the direct cause, and the neck compression would have killed most people.

On April 21, Chauvin was convicted of second-degree murder, third-degree murder, and second-degree manslaughter. Floyd's family and sympathizers cele-

brated the accountability and Benjamin Crump, the Floyd family attorney said, "Tell them in Houston [Floyd's hometown] that we [are] coming home with a W." There was also a vigil following the trial held in Macgregor Park in Houston, Floyd's hometown.

Crump and other civil rights advocates hope that this trial will set a precedent of accountability in future police brutality cases.

There were many positive reactions from public figures. Former President Barack Obama and the mayor of Minneapolis

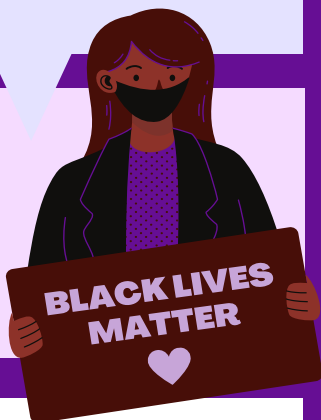
commended the jury, and current President Joe Biden called the verdict a "giant step forward in the march towards justice in America." The police chief of the Minneapolis police department testified against Chauvin and respected the decision of the jury.

Chauvin faces

up to 75 years in prison for all three charges. Judge Cahill, who presided over the trial, stated that sentencing would start in eight weeks' time. Chauvin was transferred to the Minnesota Correctional Facility April 20 and is currently on suicide watch.

ACCOUNTABILITY FOR GEORGE FLOYD

After George Floyd passed from use of lethal force from ex-officer Derek Chauvin in 2020, it set off the historic 'Black Lives Matter' civil rights movement. The trial has been long awaited.



DETAIL 1

The trial verdict of guilty garnered a lot of support from celebrities like LeBron James, President Biden, and former President Obama.

DETAIL 2

Medical professionals involved in the trial confirmed that the cause of death was due to Chauvin's restraint, not the trace amount of fentanyl or heart disease.

DETAIL 3

The footage of Floyd's death, recorded by a 17-year old bystander, shows evidence of 3 officers restraining Floyd.

DETAIL 4


The Floyd family attorney hopes the trial will set a precedent for accountability for police brutality.

CHAUVIN FOUND GUILTY

Chauvin was found guilty of all three charges including the following:

- Second-degree murder
- Third-degree murder
- Second-degree manslaughter

Chauvin is currently under suicide-watch at the Minnesota Correctional Facility and awaits his sentencing. Chauvin faces up to a total of seventy-five years for all charges.





Center for Math & Statistics Support

Math & Statistics Tutoring

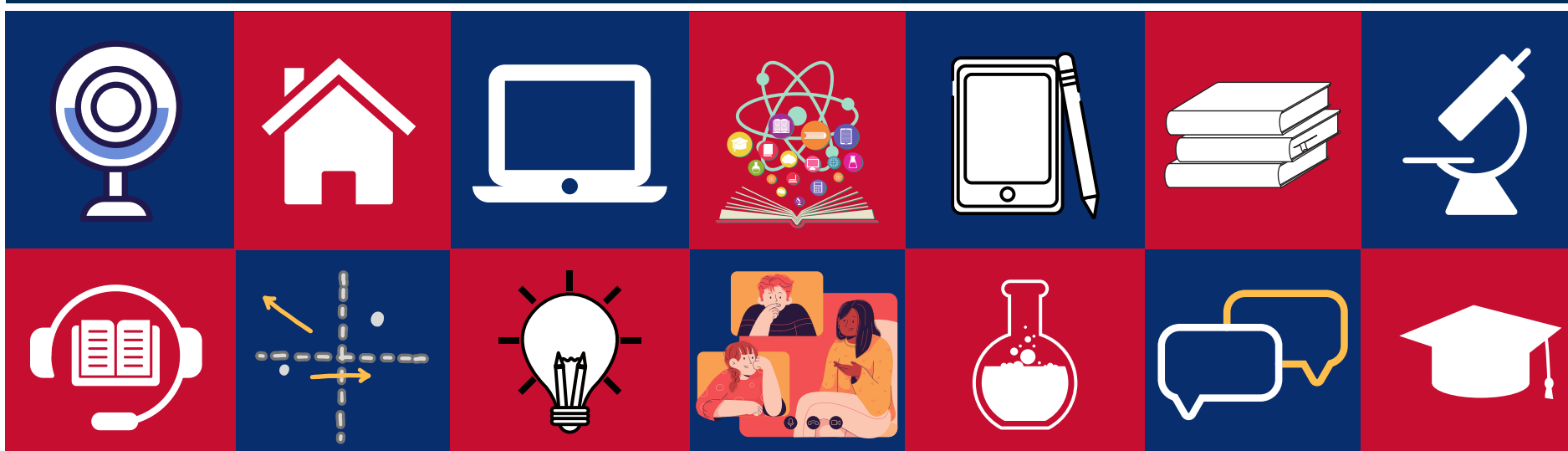
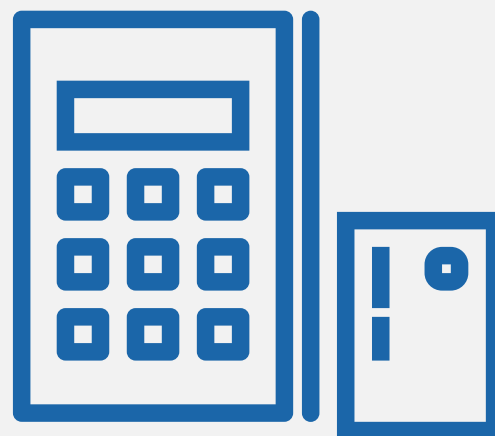
Monday-Thursday 9-7 p.m. (online only)

Friday-Saturday 9-3 p.m. (online only)

Schedule an appointment at uhd.edu/mathcenter



Interested in-person tutoring? Email us
at mathcenter@uhd.edu.



SUPPLEMENTAL INSTRUCTION

VIRTUAL SESSIONS IN ZOOM: **FULL SCHEDULE IN UHD EAB NAVIGATE**

PEER ACADEMIC ASSISTANCE FOR:

BIOLOGY | CHEMISTRY | COMPUTER SCIENCE | HISTORY | MATH
PHYSICS | POLITICAL SCIENCE | PSYCHOLOGY | STATISTICS

FOR MORE INFORMATION
SIPROGRAM@UHD.EDU | WWW.UHD.EDU/SI/ZOO



The University of Houston-Downtown

UK coronavirus strain dominates US

By Vianni Barragan

The Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Dr. Rochell Walensky, confirmed that an infectious variant of the coronavirus previously found in the United Kingdom has become the most common in the United States.

“Based on our most recent estimates from CDC surveillance, the B.1.1.7 variant is now the most common lineage circulating in the United States,” Wal-

ensky said in a White House briefing April 7.

The variant was first discovered last September in the U.K., and the earliest report in the U.S. came towards the end of December. As of April 12, there are 20,915 reported cases of the B.1.1.7 variant in the U.S., per the CDC.

There are several mutations that make B.1.1.7 more transmissible and deadly. The virus’s

S-protein, which is responsible for binding it to other cells, has seen deletion at positions 69 and 70. This mutation has given the virus less sites for binding but has increased the severity of its attachment.

This is concerning for children and young adults whose immune systems are underdeveloped because they do not possess as many angiotensin-converting enzyme-2, ACE-2, receptors. These re-

ceptors facilitate virus entry and infection and have been the primary point of binding for the coronavirus. Mutations to how B.1.1.7 attaches to ACE-2 receptors puts children at a greater risk for contracting this strain along with variants that share similar mutations, such as B.1.351 and B.1.1.28.

Greater concern emerges from scientist at the universities of Bristol and Exeter who com-

pared the mortality rates of over 54,000 confirmed cases of coronavirus. They found that patients with the B.1.1.7 variant were between 32% to 104% more likely to die within a 28-day period. Their study concluded that B.1.1.7 “has the potential to cause substantial additional mortality compared with previously circulating variants.”

Mutations to the variant have deleted sites for binding,

meaning antibodies are unable to attach to the virus with remarkable success. Regarding current vaccines, the CDC has published that “studies suggest that antibodies generated through vaccination with currently authorized vaccines recognize these variants.” However, they are unsure how the variants may affect vaccines.



READY TO MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR WORLD?

Connect with a Recruiter to Learn More



PEACECORPS.GOV/WORK

Student Run Since Volume One

Now hiring!

Business Manager

This paid position begins fall 2021 (start date flexible), and applicants must commit to the position for the full 2021-22 academic year. The job involves both advertising sales and managing the business and financial operations of the newspaper.

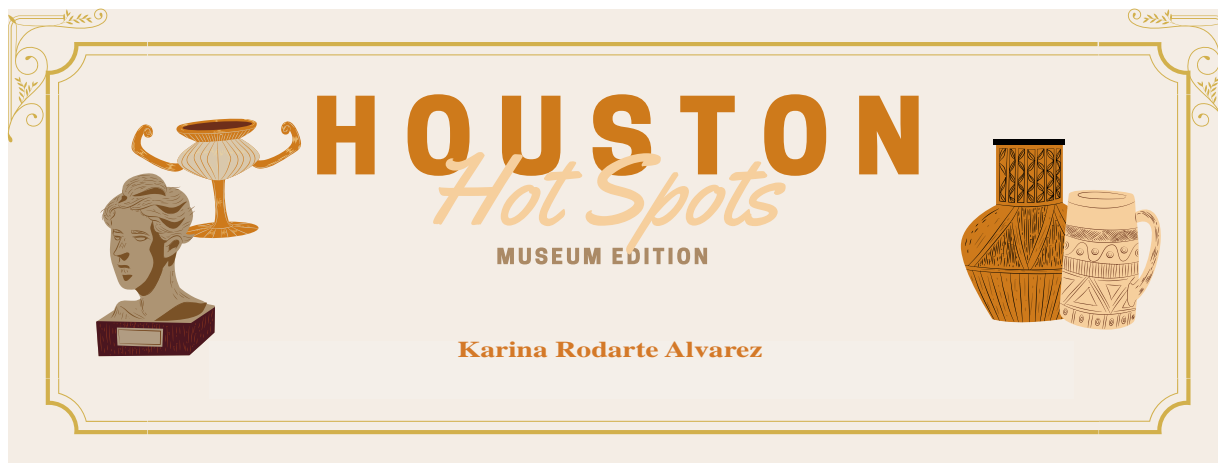
The successful candidate will have a strong orientation toward personal selling and developing advertising revenue as well as effective budgeting and management skills. Duties include managing business and financial mat-

ters for the paper, in cooperation with the student editor and faculty adviser, and expanding the sales of advertising space in the paper, including to businesses in the campus neighborhoods of NoDo and Washington St. Typical commitment is 20 hours per week; salary is \$800 per month, plus 15% commission on ad sales.

Minimum qualifications include at least sophomore standing or higher, the completion of at least one semester at UHD, successful completion of basic

business courses, and a 2.5 GPA.

To apply, please send a letter of application indicating your reasons and qualifications for applying for the position. Include as well your resume as well as an unofficial copy of your UHD transcript. Send these documents to The Dateline faculty advisor, Joe Sample, Associate Professor, at samplej@uhd.edu. Applications are sought immediately and will be accepted until position is filled.



By Safa Abdallah

One of Houston's greatest features is the Museum District where many great museums reside within walking distance. However, visiting the same museums can get boring. Below are five museums, some of which have been around for centuries, while others are newer additions.

Seismique

Seismique is one good thing that came out of the pandemic. On the west side of town at 2306 South Hwy 6, Seismique is an interactive and exploratory art museum that officially opened on Dec. 26, 2020. Seismique showcases more than 40 one-of-

a-kind, multi-dimensional, vivid displays including as much as nine million LEDs alongside sound and color that children will adore. Guests will experience projection planning from 111 projectors, visualizations, gamification, and more.

Some of Seismique's art installations include: Eden, a garden room featuring carved trees and holograms. Venus, a multi-dimensional crocheted room. Acid Rain, an optical illusion room. The Color Portal, a colorful pathway that leads to a black and white lobby. And The Hub, a 70-foot spaceship with over a million LEDs.

Masks are required and there is limited space, however, Seismique offers a no-touch experience like no other.

The Color Factory

The Color Factory debuted in San Francisco in 2017, in New York in 2018, and finally in Houston in 2019. It is located in the Upper Kirby neighborhood near Richmond Avenue and Kirby Drive. Unlike a traditional museum setting, The Color Factory is incredibly kid-friendly with its interactive art rooms that allows guests to draw on the walls, smell a color and even guess what it is.

The Color Factory showcases

local food vendors, collaborates with artists and other museums, and has an Instagram-able vibe to ensure that every guest has a forgettable picturesque experience.

Face masks are required, and social distancing must be honored

Bayou Bend Collection and Gardens

The Bayou Bend Collection and Gardens a house museum of the Museum of Fine Arts Houston, MFAH. As the former home of Houston civic leader and philanthropist, Ima Hogg, it showcases some of the finest American ceramics, furnishings, silver, and paintings

in the world.

The garden is organically maintained and located in Houston's historic River Oaks neighborhood.

Due to COVID-19, face masks are required as well as social distancing and temperature checks.

Houston Museum of Natural Science

The Houston Museum of Natural Science is one of the most visited museums in the USA, as it is a fun and educational museum that guests of all ages love and continue to enjoy.

This museum is home to many permanent exhibitions such as Ancient Egypt, Texas Wildlife, The Americas, Gems & Mineral, as well as the largest dinosaur hall in Houston.

The Houston Museum of Natural Science also occasionally hosts special exhibits. They are currently hosting Body World & The

Cycle of Life, Pompeii and Victoria, the world's largest and most complete touring T-Rex skeleton. Masks, temperature checks, and social distancing are all required due to COVID-19.

The Nancy and Rich Kinder Building

Located in the Museum District, MFAH debuted the Nancy and Rich Kinder building to showcase modern art. Though MFAH has operated in Houston for more than 100 years, the museum lacked modern art exhibitions.

Opened in Nov. 21, 2020, the Nancy and Rich Kinder Building includes a 215-seat theatre, a restaurant, and is home to the museum's collection of modern and contemporary art.

Due to COVID-19, face masks are required as well as social distancing and temperature checks.

Met Gala plans special exhibition

By Madiha Hussain

The most significant event for fashion, the Met Gala, is returning on Sept. 18. The Met Gala typically occurs the first Monday in May but will be delayed by four months this year. Presumably, the decision to move the date hopes to give attendees enough time to obtain COVID-19 vaccines. However, the event will be more "intimate" than previous years.

Next year, the 2022 Gala once again will be held on the

first Monday of May with a much more extensive guest list. The 2022 Met Gala will function as an extension of this year's Gala, as the theme of the 2021 festival will be continued in the next year's festival. Both Galas will center around American fashion.

For the 2021 Gala, which functions as Part 1 of the two-year event, the concept is, "In America: A Lexicon of Fashion." According to the Met Costume

Institute's official Instagram, Part 1 "will explore a modern vocabulary of American style emphasizing the expressive qualities of dress and deeper associations with issues of equity, diversity, and inclusion."

The 2022 Gala's concept, "In America: An Anthology of Fashion," functions as Part 2 of the two-year event. It will focus on the developmental aspect of American fashion that was a result of events that impacted

American history. It will focus on the developmental aspect of American fashion, highlighting how the impacts of historical events impacted the American fashion industry. The purpose of these concepts is to pay homage to the ever-changing world of American fashion. Andrew Bolton, the Wendy Yu Curator in Charge of the Costume Institute, said that he admired the way that American designers are pioneers of inclusivity and

diversity.

Bolton remarked, "I've been really impressed by American designers' responses to the social and political climate, particularly around issues of body inclusivity and gender fluidity."

The Met Gala was canceled last year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The theme was "About Time: Fashion and Duration."

Though canceled, fans still celebrated by recre-

ating their favorite Met Gala costumes and posting them with #MetGalaChallenge. Supporters of the Gala anticipate that this year's looks will be as iconic as the previous years.

The first exhibition will open Sept. 18 and the second will open May 5, 2022. Both exhibitions will run through Sept. 5, 2022.

Racist parody of BTS causes controversy

By Emily Saldivar

On April 10, the Chilean television show, “Mi Barrio,” broadcasted a short parody that was poorly-received by the international fanbase of Korean supergroup BTS. The sketch contained jokes that mocked Korean language, COVID-19, and associated the band with North Korea’s dictator, Kim Jong Un.

The skit began by introducing the parodic band members as variations of the dictator’s name with a corresponding number at the end. They name the first four members as “Kim Jong-Uno,” “Kim Jong-Dos,” “Kim Jong-Tres,” and “Kim Jong-Cuatro.” Later, when one of

the “band members” was asked to speak Korean, the comedian speaks in accented gibberish instead.

The program sparked international outrage as the BTS fandom, commonly referred to as ARMY, was quick to label the skit as racist, xenophobic, which is especially problematic considering the recent uptick in anti-Asian crimes, specifically in Western countries. With the help of the BTS ARMY, #ElRacismoNoEsComedia and its English equivalent, #RacismIsNotComedy, trended on Twitter the day after the skit aired.

An unofficial fan-made Twitter account for Chilean fans

of BTS brought attention to this incident and quickly organized helpful guides as to how to go about filing a report against the network, Mega.

The fan-made account @BTS_Chile tweeted, “Last night, Chilean comedy TV Show Mi Barrio presented a parody performance of BTS, where all the jokes were based on racism and xenophobia, including mockery of their language, their names and a joke related to the pandemic. This situation is extremely insensitive considering the discriminatory attacks the Asian community has suffered globally.”

Two days after the initial airing, Mega released an

apology statement regarding the situation via Twitter.

The translated version, as provided by @BTS_Chile, stated, “Humor helps people deal with the difficult moments we are going through due to the pandemic. Mega’s humor has clearly started limits in its broadcasting orientations and they are of public knowledge. However, we want to manifest our absolute empathy with those that might have felt affected by the section ‘El late de Raquel’ and we apologize/ask for your forgiveness.”

The tweet ended with a positive affirmation, “It was never our intention to offend, insult or harm

any community. We will keep on moving, learning and listening, firm with our intention: to bring entertainment to families.”

Despite the apology, there is still plenty of criticism from the BTS fandom as they scrutinize the genuineness of the released statement and assess lack of responsibility that Mega took for the offending incident.

While BTS did not release any statement in regards to the skit, their previous statement condemning violence against Asians is still circulating on social media. In their statement, they talk about their own experiences with anti-Asian hate and how it’s personal-

ly affected them.

“We cannot put into words the pain of becoming the subject of hatred and violence for such a reason. Our own experiences are inconsequential compared to the events that have occurred over the past few weeks. But these experiences were enough to make us feel powerless and chip away our self-esteem.”

They ended their statement with encouragement to act against this violence together.

“We stand against racial discrimination. We condemn violence. You, I and we, all have the right to be respected. We will stand together.”

‘Jeopardy!’ rotates hosts, ratings drop

By Amber Williams

Television game show “Jeopardy!” is facing turbulence after the death of long-time host, Alex Trebek, and the subsequent rotation of hosts. Alex Trebek, former host of “Jeopardy!” from

1984 until his death in November 2020, became a model for the television game show. In December 2020, the show temporarily replaced Alex Trebek with Ken Jennings, the record holder for the longest winning

streak on “Jeopardy!” with 74 consecutive wins. The episodes with Ken Jennings as host aired until Feb. 19, 2021, when the guest host rotation began.

“Jeopardy!” guests hosts included

a variety of personalities from “Jeopardy!”’s own executive producer Mike Richards to famed Green Bay Packers quarterback Aaron Rodgers to renowned news anchor Katie Couric and television personality of wellness, Dr. Mehmet Oz. Since implementing guests hosts the television show’s ratings have slipped by 2% and 4%.

“Jeopardy!” continued the host rotation despite the fall in ratings with CNN anchor Anderson Cooper running as host from April 19 through April 30. There is still a large number of guests remaining including “60-Minutes” corre-

spondent Bill Whitaker, “Good Morning America” host George Stephanopoulos and “Star Trek” star, LeVar Burton. This two-week host rotation will continue until a new permanent host is announced. As ratings continue to drop, why continue this trend of rotating hosts? Producer Mike Richards explained the reasons behind the show’s variety of hosts as they hope to find the right fit for the permanent position.

“We’re gonna look at people that are credible giving the clues, people that can actually give the clues accurately, that are going to be able to rule right or wrong

on the responses, and that ‘Jeopardy!’ fans will enjoy in that role, but that will not try to make themselves the star and will work to make the contestants and the game the star,” Richards told Entertainment Weekly. “There’ll be a wide range of big names that you’ll go, ‘Oh yeah, of course,’ and then my hope is that there’s a couple of, ‘Oh, I hadn’t thought of that person, and I’d like to see what that looks like hosting ‘Jeopardy!’.” The current list of guest hosts rotations will continue until Aug. 13. There is no precise date when they will release information about a permanent host.



Dr. Oz ‘run as a “Jeopardy!” guest host brought the show’s lowest ratings yet. Photo courtesy of Sony Pictures Television.

Influencers announce engagement

By Karina Rodarte Alvarez

Jenna Mourey, better known as YouTube personality, Jenna Marbles is engaged to her boyfriend of eight years, Julien Solomita. The pair is a beloved couple of YouTube who post reaction videos, cooking tutorials, Halloween skits, updates of their four dogs and snippets of their daily lives. Solomita has 2.55 million subscribers and Marbles has over 20.1 million today, even after she left the platform in June 2020.

Mourey started her channel five years after YouTube was founded and boasted the title of

the female YouTuber with the most subscribers. Her weekly content developed from shock value in her early posts to her just having fun during her daily life for content. Mourey left the platform because of the pressure of being a non-controversial YouTuber, and she converted most of her content to private. Past content showed her dressing up as a man for her male characters, song parodies with racist lyrics, blackface and more.

Mourey addressed the issues in a long video that has since been made private and does not up-

load to her YouTube channel anymore. However, her fiancé, Solomita, occasionally posts on YouTube and streams via Twitch. On April 15, Solomita announced his engagement to Mourey during a Twitch stream. Solomita said that he decided to announce it there since it was his happy place.

Solomita's announcement was simple, stating "A little while ago, I asked Jenna to marry me, and she said yes. We are engaged."

The announcement got lots of love and support from their fans. Many are abuzz wondering

if former YouTube personality Jenna Marbles will end her nearly year-long social media silence.

The wedding date is yet to be announced, but it will definitely be a nostalgic moment for fans who

watched their content since the couple started dating back in 2013.



Youtubers Jenna Marbles and Julien Solomita announced their engagement in April after more than seven years of dating. Photo courtesy of Film Daily.

Stabler and Benson of 'Law & Order SVU' reunite after a decade

By Amber Williams

Long-time fans of "Law & Order: Special Victims Unit" rejoice as Elliot Stabler, played by Christopher Meloni, returns after 10 years. Stabler is one of the leading characters of "Law and Order: SVU" dedicated to his job as a detective, though he often takes his cases personally and makes rash decisions. Rough on criminals, yet a fan favorite for his emotional weakness, Stabler is also known as a family man and a practicing Catholic whose faith sometimes makes cases complicated. Stabler always worked with Olivia Benson, played by Mariska Hargitay, from the beginning of

the series on Sept. 20, 1999.

Stabler continued to be a leading role in SVU until Season 12, Episode 24, "Smoked," that aired on May 18, 2011. In the Season 12 finale, a murder victim's daughter, Jenna Fox, shot and killed three people. Stabler shot Jenna Fox to stop her from killing other people, yet the shot was fatal, and she died.

Since Christopher Meloni left between Season 12 and Season 13, his exit was never shown. Stabler was placed on administrative leave, then a couple of episodes later denied psychiatric evaluation

and decided to retire from the NYPD. Olivia Benson received the news from her captain, which left an emotional scar.

In reality, Christopher Meloni left "Law & Order: SVU" because of a salary dispute. Regardless of how he left, Mariska Hargitay was devastated when she learned of his departure.

"I was just so sad, because we started this thing and built it together," Hargitay told People magazine. "We went through so many milestones and spent so much time together and understood so many things that nobody else could understand."

She added, "I had to do so many mental gymnastics and sort of do a reinvention in my own mind, which of course turned out to be a gift, as any sort of growth is. But I was scared; I was sad."

Meanwhile, Christopher Meloni did not like how Elliot Stabler left "SVU."

"How my character left was really unsatisfying, I think," he told The New York Post. "It almost feels that we won't do one or two [crossover] episodes and move on our merry way. I just think there will always be possibilities there. People will always

be hungry to see how we interact and how that dynamic has changed."

Still, Christopher Meloni and Mariska Hargitay spoke and spent time together during the time he left. Once it was revealed both actors would work together again, they were happy to see Benson and Stabler reunite.

"In television, when somebody leaves, obviously there's a grieving period, but the fans never moved on," Hargitay told People magazine. "And I think that is just so incredibly beautiful and so incredibly powerful." Hargitay said

the onscreen reunion was "emotional" and offscreen even more so.

But did the episode show the two characters with an emotional background? Was it worth the wait? Yes, the emotional ride between the two characters has lived up to the expectations of many fans. It is an emotional roller-coaster from start to finish with thrills and guesses throughout the episode. It is an episode worth the wait and worth watching.

Episodes are now streaming on Hulu and Peacock.

Reviews

‘Falcon and the Winter Soldier’ By Emily Saldivar

In the Disney+ series “The Falcon and the Winter Soldier,” Sam Wilson (Anthony Mackie) and James Buchanan “Bucky” Barnes (Sebastian Stan) work together to take down an anti-nationalist group known as the Flag Smashers. While that may be the biggest problem, it is not the only one as the Falcon deals with his own fight, albeit a more personal one—taking up the mantel left to him by none other than the original Captain America, Steve Rogers.

Despite Rog-

er’s confidence in him, Wilson feels that there could never be a replacement for Captain America—well until there is one. The introduction of agent John Walker (Wyatt Russell) is just what the Falcon needs to rethink his decision as Walker is crowned the new Captain America by the government but falls short in comparison to his predecessor. Throw in Bucky Barnes on the road to recovery and a new terrorist organization, and you have the story of two Avengers. They are on a mission to fix the

trouble that has risen due to the Blip which disrupted the world and then to put it back together months prior.

As far as production goes, the show dealt with its own unwanted disruptions during filming. “The Falcon and the Winter Soldier” was originally scheduled to precede Wandavision and premier in August 2020. However, due to several issues, filming was postponed more than once. Filming originally started in October 2019 in Atlanta, Georgia and was set to move

to Puerto Rico for two weeks but was delayed due to earthquakes. Production eventually caught up and moved to Prague during March 2020 where they were once again postponed due to the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. While filming resumed in the fall, it was very slow due to new COVID-19 restrictions.

Actor Anthony Mackie mentioned the frustration in an interview with Entertainment Tonight. “No, if you get within six feet of somebody, there’s some little

Czech dude coming and poking you with a stick saying, ‘You have to move.’ So, it’s rough.” Despite the frustration, the show wrapped up in October 2020 to the relief of many.

While familiar characters like Baron Zemo (Daniel Brühl) and Sharon Carter (Emily VanCamp) made it back to the big screen to partake in the latest world crisis of the MCU, there are several new characters to look out for.

Soldiers like Joaquin Torres (Dany Ramirez) and

Lemar Hoskins (Clé Bennett) are introduced as well as the elusive Isaiah Bradley (Carl Lumbly) whose existence was kept a secret from the original Captain America himself.

This six-episode series has much to look forward to and continues to set the stage for upcoming projects from Marvel Studios such as the fourth Captain America movie that was announced to be in development.

The Falcon and the Winter Soldier is now streaming on Disney+.

‘The New Mutants’ By James Jurewicz

“The New Mutants” is a science fiction-horror film set in Marvels X-men Universe. Released in theaters on Aug. 28, 2020, the film was directed by Josh Boone who is also known for directing the heartbreaking film adaptation of “The Fault in our Stars.” “The New Mutants” is about a facility run by a sole doctor in charge of five mutants all in their middle to late teens. The film got released on multiple home video disc formats on Nov. 17, 2020. It made \$46.9 million against a \$80-million budget.

An unseen force decimates an

entire Cheyenne Reservation, leaving a sole survivor. Dani Moonstar (Blu Hunt) awakens handcuffed to a hospital bed. She is told she is the only one who survived a tornado that destroyed her reservation. Dr. Cecilia Reyes, played by Alice Braga, is the sole employee in charge of a hospital with only four other patients, mutants like Dani. Each young mutant possesses unique, unstable powers. Dani’s mutant powers are still unknown and require extensive research. Therefore, according to the doctor, they must be sequestered “for their safety” as

well as the safety of the public. The doctor takes orders from the Essex Corporation through cryptic computer messages, directing her research of the mutant youths. There is revealed to be a force field surrounding the grounds of the hospital keeping the teens imprisoned.

The new mutants include Brazilian Roberto (Henry Zaga), codenamed Sunspot, capable of emitting flames from his entire body. Sam is from Kentucky (Charlie Heaton), with his flight and ability to blast off like a cannonball. Many viewers will

recognize “Game of Thrones” Maisie Williams who portrays Rahne, a Scottish mutant with werewolf-like abilities. Anya Taylor-Joy was cast as Dani’s bully, Illyana Rasputin from Russia. Her powers include the use of magic. Illyana also carries around a small dragon puppet she named Lockheed which she engages in conversation.

All five of the mutants are struggling to control their powers. The doctor is there to act as the teens’ counselor as well as their jailer. She holds the key to leaving the facility. After Dani’s arrival, everyone starts to experience terri-

fying visions from their complicated and troubled pasts. Meanwhile, research on Dani’s mutation yields little results regardless of the constant blood drawn and unusual tests performed by Dr. Reyes. Dani swiftly establishes her presence with the other teens, growing particularly close with Rahne and fighting back against Illyana’s bullying.

This is an X-men spinoff without any actual X-men. The mutant team is only mentioned in the film sparingly. While the cast is small, there is a large payoff with this production choice. The audience gets the chance to know each and every

character very well. At 94 minutes, the film’s pacing is swift and enjoyable. The practical effects look great, and the director made a wise choice with the decision to use less computer-generated graphics. Though it was not successful financially and most critics were not impressed, fans of the X-men and horror films will find something to enjoy.

“The New Mutants” is now available to stream on HBOMax.

Elected officials must oppose voter suppression bills SB 7, HB 6

By Indira Zaldivar

Across the country, states are loosening pandemic restrictions as more individuals receive the vaccine. However, as the COVID-19 pandemic subsides, another issue re-emerges—gun violence and legislative response.

Gun violence in America is a social epidemic, impacting many regardless of ethnic background, age, race, sexuality or other differentiating labels. Since the late 2010s, many Americans favor gun reform in the wake of massacres at schools, concerts, places of

worship, or other public spaces.

A recent poll from USA Today and Ipsos reports that two-thirds of the population support stricter gun laws. Among party lines, 90% of Democrats and 35% of Republicans (GOP) support legislation concerning gun reform. The latter group's opposition to pro-gun reform laws rests on two factors: money and re-election. The National Rifle Association, NRA, is a powerful GOP political faction, funding campaigns and politicians that support anti-gun

reform legislation and stances.

Suppose a GOP lawmaker openly supported gun reform. In that case, the lawmaker would be "primaried." Meaning, in their re-elective year, they would be challenged by a contender who is financially backed by the party (state and national) and the NRA. In politics, money is key to a candidate's win, and without prominent financial support, chances of being elected or re-elected are slim.

In Congress, gun reform legislation

remains at a stalemate in its upper chamber (The Senate). While Democrats advocate for massive reform, Republicans advocate for additional campaign spend change. Arduous efforts on gun reform made in the House chamber would be dismissed in the Senate chamber, especially under the then-Majority leader, Mitch McConnell (R-KY).

In the aftermath of gun massacres in public spaces, the conversation concerning stricter gun laws re-emerges, and changes are promised but left unfulfilled. As politics continue to polarize, gun reform

will remain stagnant. This only leads to more deaths attributed to careless gun violence.

The only solution to the growing gun violence is implementing a referendum. Like the United Kingdom's Brexit vote, a national election concerning stricter gun laws would allow more Americans to voice their concerns more directly.

A referendum would implement a nation-wide vote, free of political group funding, allowing citizens to vote their conscience on the topic of gun reform. Whichever decision

is favored should be honored by the Executive office of the President and signed into law without issue.

If lawmakers refuse to abide by serving their constituents' best interests, it is only fair to allow a referendum election on gun reform. Allowing citizens to vote freely on this topic can end the endless cycle of gun violence, reformation talks, and disregarded legislation. Should this idea be rejected, anticipate that this cycle will be known as a massive failure in American politics.

Ask representatives to support equitable multimodal transportation

Houston Highway
By Indira Zaldivar

Three bills that would allow for more equitable transportation in Texas are currently in committee during the 87th Texas Legislature. SJR 40/HJR 109, HB 4515 and HB 4520 are bills that are backed up by various community advocacy groups because more Houstonians want the Texas Department of Transportation to invest in making multimodal transportation such as bike lanes, public transportation and sidewalks, safer, more abundant and reliable.

SJR 40/HJR109 is a joint resolution that would allow TxDOT to use more dedicated general revenue to enhance public trans-

portation, bike paths, public sidewalks and non-toll highways. Currently, the Texas Department of Transportation is required to spend 97% of its funds on highways and car-centric infrastructure, per the Texas Constitution. In February, Houston Senator Borris Miles filed SJR 40 in the Texas Senate. Its identical equivalent in the House, HJR 109, was filed by Rep. Armando Walle from Houston. If lawmakers pass SJR 40, then it would go on the November 2021 ballot for the public to vote to amend or not the constitution.

HB 4515 was filed in March by Rep. Penny Morales-Shaw from

Houston. HB 4515 would require that TxDOT consider the alternative transportation designs that local governments propose.

Lastly, HB 4520 was also filed by Rep. Morales-Shaw in March. This bill would require that the Texas Transportation Commission include one frequent transit user in its decision-making process in hopes of making the decision process richer and more inclusive.

TxDOT is currently facing a lawsuit filed by Harris County for issues surrounding the controversial North Houston Highway Improvement Project, also known as I-45 expansion. The North

Improvement Project which would start in the summer and be in the works for the next seven to 10 years with a price tag of \$7.5 billion was stalled by

the Federal Highway Administration in March for civil rights and environmental concerns. The project as it is currently proposed would displace 1,000 homes, displace businesses and reduce parkland.

"Vision C" is the alternative to the North Houston Highway Improvement Project that Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner proposed in a letter sent to Commissioner Laura Ryan on May 12, 2020.

Continued on page 23



Ridership on local bus and light rail in 2020 "never dipped below 43%," according to a report by public-transit advocacy group, LINK Houston. Photo credit: Indira Zaldivar

Gun reform referendum ends Congressional dysfunction

By Aansa Usmani

Across the country, states are loosening pandemic restrictions as more individuals receive the vaccine. However, as the COVID-19 pandemic subsides, another issue re-emerges—gun violence and legislative response.

Gun violence in America is a social epidemic, impacting many regardless of ethnic background, age, race, sexuality or other differentiating labels. Since the late 2010s, many Americans favor gun reform in the wake of massacres at schools,

concerts, places of worship, or other public spaces.

A recent poll from USA Today and Ipsos reports that two-thirds of the population support stricter gun laws. Among party lines, 90% of Democrats and 35% of Republicans (GOP) support legislation concerning gun reform. The latter group’s opposition to pro-gun reform laws rests on two factors: money and re-election. The National Rifle Association, NRA, is a powerful GOP political faction, funding campaigns

and politicians that support anti-gun reform legislation and stances.

Suppose a GOP lawmaker openly supported gun reform. In that case, the lawmaker would be “primaried.” Meaning, in their re-elective year, they would be challenged by a contender who is financially backed by the party (state and national) and the NRA. In politics, money is key to a candidate’s win, and without prominent financial support, chances of being elected or re-elected are slim.

In Congress,

gun reform legislation remains at a stalemate in its upper chamber (The Senate). While Democrats advocate for massive reform, Republicans advocate for additional campaign spare change. Arduous efforts on gun reform made in the House chamber would be dismissed in the Senate chamber, especially under the then-Majority leader, Mitch McConnell (R-KY).

In the aftermath of gun massacres in public spaces, the conversation concerning stricter gun laws re-emerges, and changes are promised but left unfulfilled. As

politics continue to polarize, gun reform will remain stagnant. This only leads to more deaths attributed to careless gun violence.

The only solution to the growing gun violence is implementing a referendum. Like the United Kingdom’s Brexit vote, a national election concerning stricter gun laws would allow more Americans to voice their concerns more directly.

A referendum would implement a nation-wide vote, free of political group funding, allowing citizens to vote their

conscience on the topic of gun reform. Whichever decision is favored should be honored by the Executive office of the President and signed into law without issue.

If lawmakers refuse to abide by serving their constituents’ best interests, it is only fair to allow a referendum election on gun reform. Allowing citizens to vote freely on this topic can end the endless cycle of gun violence, reformation talks, and disregarded legislation. Should this idea be rejected, anticipate that this cycle will be known as a massive failure in American politics.

Ask representatives to support transportation

(continued)

By Indira Zaldivar

Various Houston city officials and community groups designed it in a way

to minimize displacement and align with the city’s goals to make transportation in Houston more

equitable. However, TxDOT ignored this alternative and instead issued a Record of Decision Feb. 4 to move forward with the contentious North Houston Highway

Improvement Project. UHD Bike Club’s founding member, Alejandro “Lex” Perez said he is grateful with local government led by Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo for suing TxDOT. Perez said Harris County and local officials have been “crucial in amplifying local voices.” For Perez, the NHHIP as it stands, will not “benefit the inner loop community.” He advocates for safe-bike infrastructure in his community as he bikes every day and says many people in his community bike and opt for take public transportation instead of driving.

“Houston residents in the inner loop have outgrown car culture and multimodal transportation is the future that TxDOT

should be looking forward to,” Perez said.

Many community advocacy groups have filed numerous letters over the years to denounce the massive displacement and socioeconomic and environmental implications attached with TxDOT’s project. Representatives from Air Alliance Houston and Stop TxDOT I-45 were present in the April 20 hearing of the three bills in the Texas Capitol.

These three bills would not only make transportation more equitable as more Houstonians are biking and studies from The Kinder Institute for Urban Research and LINK Houston have highlighted that Houstonians kept relying on METRO through the pandemic, but these

bills also consider climate change. The transportation sector accounts for the largest share of greenhouse gas emissions, 28%. Investing in multimodal transportation such as biking and public transportation allows Houstonians more opportunities to reduce their carbon footprint and reap health benefits.

“All three bills focus on getting TxDOT to focus on a paradigm shift that our Mayor Sylvester Turner praised but never really pushed for at the state level,” Perez said. “We now have elected officials on our side speaking on our behalf at the state level and it feels great. These bills are pivotal for making Houston more multimodal for generations to come.”



Bus riders wait for the approaching bus, route 209, on Nov. 9, 2020. Photo credit: Indira Zaldivar.

Fat phobia blossoms from elitism

By Argenis Nino

In her 2019 book, *Sabrina Strings*, Ph.D., discusses what she believes is the real reason behind fat phobia. “Fearing the Black Body: The Racial Origins of Fat Phobia” thoroughly dives into the ways in which racism towards the black community branches out into the world of the human body.

Dr. Strings began by describing how highly regarded big bodies once were. They were a sign of status and wealth and many paintings and documents in history have shown that with-

out fail. Why is it that now being big or fat, more often than not, carries a connotation of being undesirable? Dr. Strings began her rant on how high Renaissance artists often portrayed people of color very thinly to show their weak state. This mostly applied to the ever-growing economy of slavery.

Dr. Strings then discussed the Enlightenment period where people began to equate fatness with “savagery.” She argued that as slavery continued and the discovery and imperialism of lands

occurred, European diets and lifestyles evolved

Dr. Strings gathered works by early race scientists from the late 1600s such as George Cuvier, J.J. Viery, and Georges-Louis Leclerc. These men correlate gluttony and with the traits of Black person. The consistent bashing of these minorities by researchers and scientists with credibility inferred a shift in the way the body was perceived. No longer was the thinness of slaves depicted as weak, rather their thin

bodies were the new norm, though varying from the ideal skin tone, of course.

Then came the 1800s. With a booming economy came another shift in bodily ideals. Black women gained a natural fat which challenged the American women standard, as argued by Dr. Strings. As immigrants flooded the nation, so did a variety in body shapes. Press and media sources panicked to maintain a white woman as the image of beauty. Those sources eventually tied fatness to ideas of “African

savagery” and never looked back.

Now, although Dr. Strings made brilliant points, I don’t solely agree with racism being the root of fat phobia. I do however, by reading her work and searching resources, that racism did play a role in fat phobia.

Ultimately, I see fat phobia and racism as branches of the same tree. That tree being the European/white elitist standard. The superiority complex behind this Eurocentric elitism is what allowed fat

phobia and racism to blossom in America. Elitists created the narrative to allow for such a history. The modern era is trying to chop down that tree by teaching the importance of black history and body positivity.

We accept that these are two different entities that spread one mission to achieve a more unified space among each other. That’s why I see racism and fat phobia as separate entities stemming from elitism.

AI robots deliver food to UH students

By Jesse Fitzgerald Rodriguez Sr.

Last week I visited UH off of Calhoun Rd. Rain poured on my windshield as I drove around looking for somewhere to park.

At that moment, I witnessed little robots, six of them, no bigger than a large printing machine like the ones in the libraries. Later that day, I researched these innovative little machines and discovered that they are the newest revolution on any campus in Texas so far.

Are you hungry? Download the Starship app. Yes, these robots will deliver to anyone on campus for a flat fee of \$1.99. I expect this fee will change in the future, but for now, it is a bargain.

As social distancing continues, rules and regulations solidify our lives without questioning them. These little

artificial intelligence robots are there to help hungry students who show, from what I saw, no signs of slowing down. Why is UH doing this?

David Riddle, Chartwells resident district manager, added his thoughts during a UH news release back in November of 2019 and implied that the Starship robots are here to stay. He noted that, “This increases our capacity to reach more customers, and I expect the robots will quickly become part of campus life.”

If history tends to repeat itself, and usually it does, many other educational campuses and organizations will add this asset to their establishment if they have not already.

Maybe or maybe not. But for now, this fleet of 30 Starship autonomous delivery robots is gaining popularity.

How so? They offer robotic food deliveries from one of eleven UH Dining locations (including Drexler’s, Starbucks, Einstein Brothers Bagels, Panda Express, and Cougar Village Market). How? Drop a pin by selecting the location on the service map where the UH student, staff, or faculty want their food to be delivered.

As I continued driving in the rain and finally into the UH parking lot, I wondered what artificial intelligence would occur next. Can you imagine the possibilities?

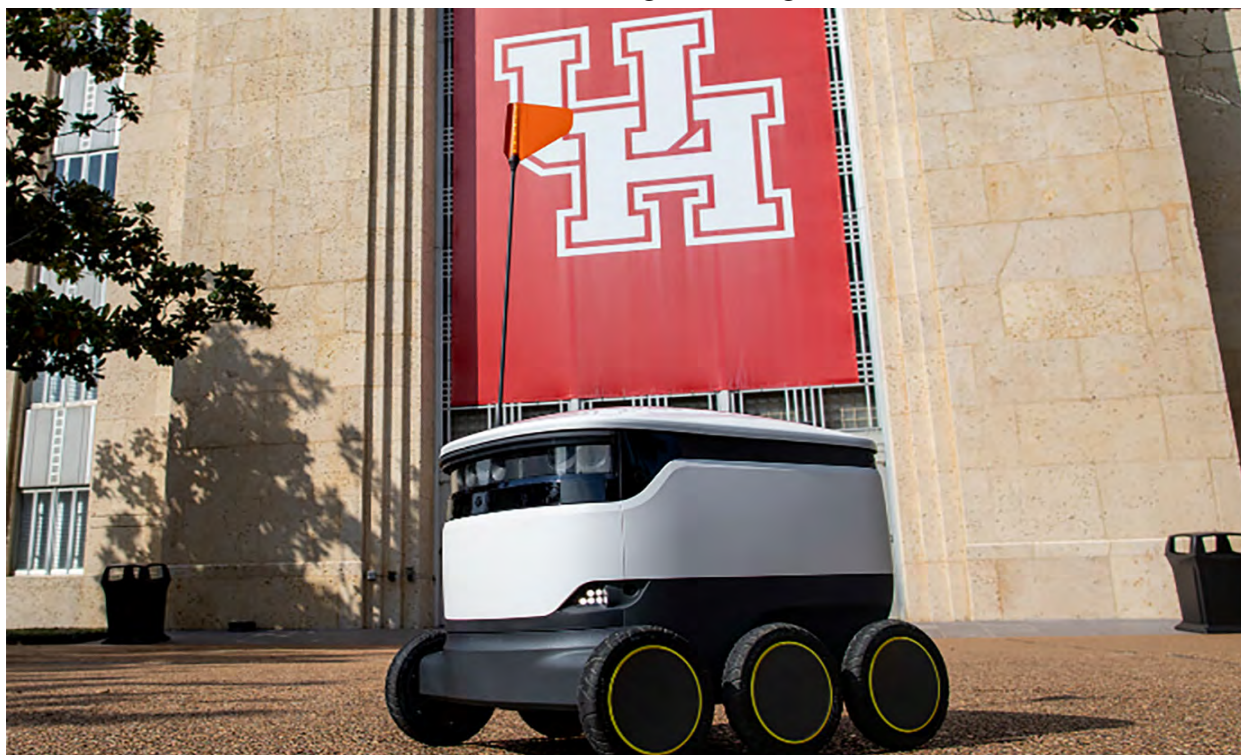
Ryan Tuohy, senior vice president of business development for Starship, did and took massive action.

“Robotic

delivery is affordable, convenient, and environmentally friendly, Tuohy said in the same UH news release. “We’re excited to start offering students, staff, and faculty at Houston delivery within minutes when they need it most.”

In the end, I believe this AI robot is a great innovation, great timing. As this

savvy tech generation uses technology more and more, I do not see this AI as a bad idea. On the contrary, it is an excellent opportunity to build bigger and higher quality AI products to help UH students and the idea has potential to create other AI products to assist homebound residents and older adults of all ages.



In 2019, UH became the first university in Texas to offer robotic food deliveries. Photo courtesy of UH’s website.