

# Agreement signed ensuring seamless transfers to Texas Tech

by TINA GONZALEZ  
Feature Editor

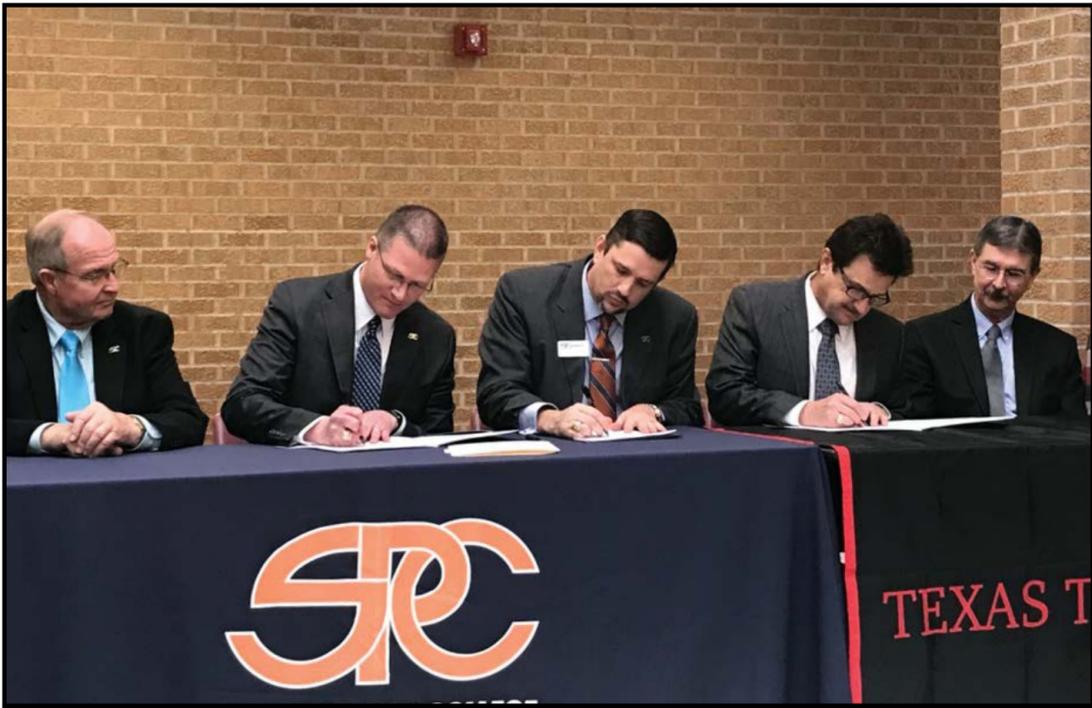
“Destination Raiderland”

South Plains College and Texas Tech University recently signed a new agreement to ensure a seamless transition for transferring students.

The announcement was made on Jan. 17 in the mall area of the Student Services Building on the Levelland campus.

Dr. Robin Satterwhite, president of South Plains College, and Dr. Lawrence Schovanec, president of Texas Tech University, and administrators for both institutions worked hard to create an agreement that is mutually beneficial.

Through this agreement, Texas Tech will identify SPC as a direct pathway for students to get into Tech. SPC students will now be more encouraged to finish their associate’s degree at SPC knowing their classes will transfer with no doubt.



Mike Box, Dr. Robin Satterwhite, Dr. Ryan Gibbs, and Dr. Lawrence Schovanec signing the memorandum of understanding on Jan. 17 on the Levelland campus.

TINA GONZALEZ/PLAINSMAN PRESS

This should help the graduation rates for SPC and Tech. SPC students are guaranteed admission unless there are other hindering factors. This helps

Texas Tech meet their transfer goals. Also, the agreement allows transfer students to receive a grandfather clause into the same catalog for the aca-

demical year as those native Texas Tech students.

“The majority of students who have junior

college backgrounds are more likely to succeed in a university,” said Dr. Satterwhite. “Most of

the students in higher education in the state of Texas come from a community college.” Dr. Schovanec also included that more than 75% of students at Texas Tech will have some credit from a community college.

SPC students will now have concrete criteria to follow if they want to attend TTU. Knowing that their classes will transfer with no trouble, SPC students will almost feel like Red Raiders, according to Dr. Schovanec.

See “New” on pg. 2

## Students remember Dr. King during MLK day event

by ANNIE GOLDEN  
Online Editor

Everyone has a dream. For Dr. Martin Luther King, that dream was equality.

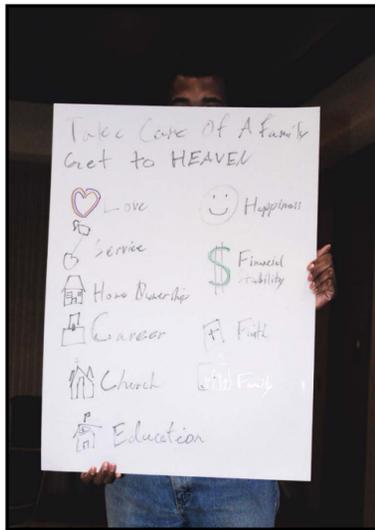
Two South Plains College student organizations arranged a Martin Luther King Day celebration to instill the desire for greatness in students, faculty, and staff.

The Student Government Association and Residence Hall Association jointly planned an interactive event for the community to engage with their peers and unite through culture and equality.

The event was held on Jan. 16 in the Sundown Room of the Student Center on the Levelland campus, where Miranda English, director of Student Life, greeted those in attendance with hot chocolate and a facts quiz

about the man with a dream, Dr. King. The quiz tested college students on their knowledge of Dr. King. Some of the students were surprised by their lack of knowledge about where he grew up and his past that made him a strong activist for equality.

The purpose for SGA and RHA putting this celebration together was to expand the college’s mul-



South Plains College students make “blueprints” for success during the MLK event on Jan. 16. ANNIE GOLDEN/PLAINSMAN PRESS

titicultural campus events, and to encourage the community to understand and remember the values Dr. King possessed, according to English.

“Everyone can be great, because greatness is determined by service,” English says. “We really want to ensure SPC gives back to the community, and Martin Luther King was big on serving the community and finding out what the need is in the community, and filling it.”

English said that she wants all students to remember the character traits such as courage, strength, perseverance, and leadership. Dr. King sought out justice and equality, which can posi-

See “Students” on pg. 2

## SPC sign gets new shine after restoration

by KYLE EWING  
Staff Writer

Some eagle-eyed students might have noticed last semester that the chrome SPC sign near the front entrance to the

The installation, donated by Mike & Janna Worley and the employees of Worley Welding Works, Inc. of Levelland in 2009, was showing signs of rust and needed some slight repairs to restore its origi-

ation before it became irreversible. The sign was carefully removed before being sent to Uma, Arizona for the re-chroming process.

The rust was purely cosmetic, and the sign showed no structural damage.

Watkins says that he wanted to ensure that the chrome would keep glistening for years to come. With the installation being so large, it had to be taken apart to be able to fit the “chrome baths.” The entire process took from August 2017 to December, a little less than five months.

Watkins has a particular connection to the SPC sculpture. He had worked at Worley Welding Works, Inc. when the piece was designed and built. Having such a connection to the sign left no doubt in his

mind that Worley Welding Works needed to be the ones in charge of its restoration.

With a team of people who are so familiar with the original design, the restoration process brought the once rusted structure to a “like new” condition.

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The SPC sign after the re-chroming process. KYLE EWING/PLAINSMAN PRESS

The rust that collect on the back of the SPC sign before it was fixed with maintenance. Photo Courtesy of Ronnie Watkins

Levelland Campus off College Avenue suddenly disappeared for a few months.

Fret not, the metal structure has been returned, and it even has a new glow to it.

Ronnie Watkins, dean of administrative services at South Plains College, had the task of overseeing a project last semester that would bring new life to the chrome sculpture.

“It was an easy decision to get the sign repaired,” says Watkins.

The college takes great pride in the gift from Worley Welding Works and will continue to make repairs as needed to ensure the structure’s integrity, according to Watkins.

While the chrome was showing rust, this proactive step in maintenance helped alleviate the situ-

### Cover to Cover

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SPC math instructor reaches 25th year at the college. **page 4**

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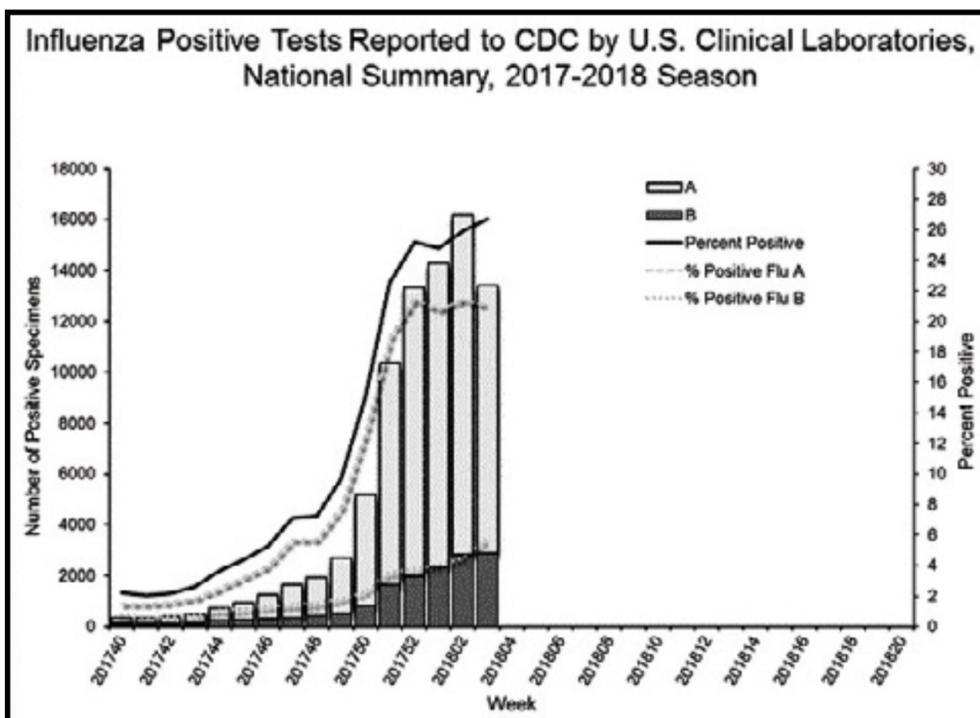
# Flu reaches epidemic levels, students should take precautions

by AUTUMN BIPPERT  
Editor-in-Chief

This year's flu season is more intense than any year before.

According to federal health officials, it is only getting worse. The flu is widespread throughout the United States. It is on track to surpass the 2014-2015 flu season, when 34 million Americans got the flu, 710,000 were hospitalized and about 56,000 people died, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

The CDC is reporting that, "All U.S. states but Hawaii continue to report widespread flu activity, and the number of states experiencing 'high' influenza activity increased from 32 states plus New



York City and Puerto Rico to 39 states plus New York City and Puerto Rico."

In Texas,

there have been 2,300 flu-related deaths reported this season. This doesn't include many January deaths because it takes several weeks for the state to receive that data from the CDC.

This year, 80 percent of tracked flu cases are H3N2. The last time this strain was dominant was the 2014-15 season, which saw 19 pediatric flu deaths. This recent flu season has seen 37 pediatric deaths nationwide, including eight from Texas.

It is recommended to get a flu shot, even with it being so late in the season. Even though it may not prevent the flu, it does lessen the symptoms and recovery time. The CDC's reports show that

85 percent of children who have died from the flu did not receive the flu

shot. The CDC's website recommends everyone 6 months old and older receive a flu shot.



land campus, only 10 to 12 students have tested positive for the flu.

According to DeEtte Edens, associate director of Health and Wellness, "This year has had a crazy flu season. People are exhibiting high fever

with upper respiratory issues, and they are testing positive. Some with what appears to be a common cold are also testing positive. Even those with upset stomachs have tested positive for flu."

Edens offers the following tips for reducing exposure to the flu:

Wash your hands – wash your hands multiple times daily to avoid the spread of germs.

Avoid close contact – avoid close contact with people who are sick. She suggests that people refrain from participating in social activities whenever possible.

Stay home when you are sick – if possible, stay home from work and school when you are sick to help prevent others from catching your illness.

Cover your mouth and nose – cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing to prevent those around you from getting sick.

Get plenty of rest – give yourself time to get well by getting plenty of bedrest.

Edens added that the flu season normally continues through February and ends with the absence of fewer positive tests.

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**FLU SEASON**

**Good Health Habits for Prevention**

**Avoid close contact.**  
Avoid close contact with people who are sick, keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick too.

**Stay home when you are sick.**  
If possible, stay home from work, school and errands when you are sick. You will help prevent others from catching your illness.

**Cover your mouth and nose.**  
Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing and sneezing. It may prevent those around you from getting sick.

**Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.**  
Germs are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches his or her eyes, nose, or mouth.

**Clean your hands.**  
Washing your hands often will help protect you from germs.

**Practice other good health habits.**  
Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids.

## New agreement secures smooth transfer for students

Continued from pg. 1

The new agreement, a memorandum of understanding, changes the process of what transfer students mean to both institutions, because both institutions benefit from success rates.

"More than 75 percent of students at Texas Tech will have some credit from a community college," said Dr. Schovanec.

Dr. Schovanec expressed during the gathering that it is important for the state that four-year institutions and two-year institutions have meaningful articulation agreements that provide a "seamless transition" from one institution to the other.

"This is a great day for our students," added Dr. Satterwhite. "This agreement has been talked about for years. Both in-



Dr. Lawrence Schovanec speaks about the seamless transition SPC students will have to Texas Tech.

TINA GONZALEZ/PLAINSMAN PRESS

stitutions have been pushing for a difference with the process for pre-transfer students."

This agreement gives students a bigger incentive to finish two years at SPC.

"Our presence here I think sends a message about how important our relationship is with this community and South Plains college in particular," said Dr. Schovanec.

"Every community college that feeds into TTU is important," he added.

"Each student helps the university prolong culture, inclusiveness, and access. Texas Tech values the character and qualities that comes from this part of the country. South Plains College holds a special position in that regard."

SPC is the largest feeder of community college transfers to Texas Tech.

"It is a priority for us to maintain these connections," said Dr. Schovanec. "Community colleges have a big impact in how students transfer from school to school."

Both institutions recognize the importance of success and accessibility, which are just a few reasons the memorandum of understanding was signed.

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### PUBLICATION STATEMENT

The Plainsman Press is published every two weeks during regular semesters by journalism students at South Plains College in Levelland, Texas. Opinions herein are those of the writer and not necessarily those of the staff, the administration, Board of Regents, advisor or advertisers.

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# Fake news damages credibility of media



**[Editor's note: This story is the first part of the multi-part series "Misinformation" examining the causes and effects of the fake news problem that begins with Issue #7 and concludes in Issue #10. Several staff members took it upon themselves to interview and conduct research. The results of their combined efforts follow.]**

by **AUTUMN BIPPERT**  
Editor-in-Chief

"President Trump Mocked Prime Minister Trudeau for Celebrating Thanksgiving Six Weeks Early" is among some of the "fake news" headlines you might read on your phone. Absurd headlines and news stories have been circling the Internet for sometime now, causing a fake news crisis.

David Carroll, associate professor at Parsons School of Design in New York City, said that several simultaneous, inter-related conditions have led to the "fake news" hysteria.

"Firstly, market failures in the attention econ-

omy driven by misaligned incentives of the digital advertising ecosystem have devastated local newsrooms and pressured national outlets to over-produce content to make up for falling ad revenue in the form of pricing," Carroll explained in an exclusive interview with the Plainsman Press.

Carroll says that during the past two years, Google and Facebook have captured the digital advertising market from online news producers.

"The adtech industry and the platforms have made it incredibly easy for anyone in the world to cheaply target anyone else for ads and deploy websites that convince enough people to load them to collect the ad revenue," Carroll said. "So before we even consider the political aspects of the crisis, there is a complex economic crisis to understand and confront."

Carroll explains that there's an overlap between the economic and political crises.

"That can be best illustrated by teens from Veles, Macedonia who have discovered that American's ad tracking cookies earn the highest revenue on the ad exchanges," he adds. "Europeans have strict privacy laws so their tracking cookies are worth far less on the exchanges even though they are attractive demographics to advertisers. The Macedonian fraudsters set up fake websites and target

Americans to earn the highest ad rates on ad exchanges, such as Google's AdSense. Once they real-



David Carroll, associate professor at Parsons School of Design in New York City, New York.

ized that political topics attract some of the highest engagements, they exploit an economic incentive to manufacture falsified stories to attract clicks from Facebook so people load their pages and to collect their monthly revenue from Google," Carroll says.

There are also domestic hoaxers who build fake sites for profit rather than political ideology, according to Carroll.

"In fact, using adtech forensics in websites that reveal Google AdSense account IDs, operators have been discovered that produce hyperpartisan and hoax news to target both ends of the political spectrum, truly an equal opportunity business model," Carroll said. "There are also hyperpartisan outlets that do have an ideological intent to

produce and disseminate what can best be described as propaganda, or at least, slanted news production.

In these instances, the profit motive is not the underlying intent of the publisher. Breitbart, for instance, has lost more than 3,700 advertisers to consumer protests for its content. Wealthy donors keep it afloat (Robert and Rebekah Mercer)."

Carroll continues, "Finally, we know that foreign state actors use 'cut-outs' to produce propaganda online that targets across the political spectrum of America to foment division and sow chaos."

During recent hearings in Congress, lawyers from Facebook, Google, and Twitter testified about an information operation that reached hundreds of millions of unwitting Americans.

"Disentangling all of these economic and political motivations across domestic and international operators is extremely difficult," said Carroll. "It helps to attempt to apply the terms 'misinformation' distinct from

"disinformation" rather than the catch-all term "Fake News," which has itself been co-opted by the president to refer to unflattering reporting rather than its usage immediately after the election, referring to fake news sites that serve as a business model of scamming people with clickbait. We should probably call these sites junk news sites."

Social media has played into the fake news problem, according to Carroll.

"By radically disrupting the distribution model, the big platforms of Facebook and Google not only mostly captured the advertising revenue from newspapers and magazines, but also changed the way people consume news," Carroll explains. "Instead of visiting home pages where human editors arrange news, increasingly people get their news interspersed between content created by friends and family. By presenting all content as equal in the news feed or search results, the publishers are devalued and de-branded and flattened."

Political views and the use of social media also affect fake news, according to Carroll.

"People share news on social media to express their own political identity," said Carroll, "and to present their worldview to their peers. In this interaction model, the authority of human editors cedes to algorithms determining placement of news while people start to trust their peers and family members with news selection more than experts and professionals."

There are several ways that fake news can be spotted and avoided.

"Illegitimate news sites peddling misinformation or disinformation look and feel like junk news because they are literally cobbled together on the cheap," Carroll said. "Looking at the quality of the ads on the page is one signal of quality. If the ads seem terrible, it's likely that the operator has been banned from premium ad exchanges and monetizes their pages with bottom-feeder adtech. Always look for bylines and check the masthead in the "about" page. Once you try to verify the identity of the author or operator of a site and you hit dead-ends, that's a sure-fire signal of junk news. Often, headlines are written to be incendiary on junk news sites to attract the clicks and score the ad impressions. But when you read the body of the article, the details usually do not support the basis of the headline."

Carroll lists other ways to spot fake news, such as doing reverse image searches of the header image which can often reveal the original source. Junk news operators steal content from more legitimate sites and then sensationalize the content to attract attention and ad impressions.

"Trust in media is at an all-time low," Carroll concludes, "and citizens have become increasingly polarized."

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## Students celebrate MLK day, learn history

Continued from pg. 1

tively impact a community such as SPC.

"SPC wanted to highlight Martin Luther King, not only on MLK day, but for the entire week, and concluded it would tie into Black History month as well," said English. "I wanted to engage the students by not only putting together a slideshow, but with interactive activities too."

Some activities were writing dreams out individually, creating posters with a group, and sharing those with others. The group posters were maps, or blueprints, of what the

students who participated think is required to reach their dreams and how they should live their best, most successful lives.

The students at the celebration honored Dr. King by working together to come up with ideas and dreams that they want to accomplish in the future. Providing everyone at the event with equal opportunity to state what their dreams are, and the possible ways they can achieve those dreams, was a perfect example of showing how Dr. King's legacy can impact so many people. It was a great way to inspire students to reflect on how they want to change the

world. A big change Dr. King instilled in the world was to unite as one and work toward something greater, such as equality.

Other events held in January to honor Dr. King and celebrate Black History month were a documentary called "Remembering Martin," and a film of impactful moments of King's speeches. Also planned is a Black History Film Festival on Feb. 5, Feb. 16 and Feb. 23, beginning at 6:30 p.m. each day in the Sundown Room of the Student Center on the Levelland campus.

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## Senior Sneak Preview brings exciting energy for future students

by **ADÁN RUBIO**  
News Editor

Area high school students will soon be given the chance to explore South Plains College and experience everything it has to offer.

The annual Senior Sneak Preview for high school seniors is set for Feb. 9. The event will begin at 9 a.m. in the Texan Dome on the Levelland campus. About 700 students from more than 10 area high schools are expected to attend.

Seniors who register for Senior Sneak will be given the opportunity to

tour the Levelland campus, where they will be exposed to their intended major and other areas of interest.

Seniors will view performances by SPC students, learn about different courses from instructors, and meet SPC President Dr. Robin Satterwhite. Lunch will also be provided. Time will be set aside for students to tour the campus and interact with instructors and current SPC students, along with several radio stations that will be present at the event.

There are many bene-

fits that seniors can expect to receive from Senior Sneak. Peyton Sauer, coordinator of new student programs at SPC, says that this event allows for students to resolve any questions or issues toward attending SPC.

"The benefit is that it is kind of a one-stop shop," said Sauer. "Anyone that they may need to talk to is present at this event."

"It is a large event," said Sauer. "The energy is great and gets them excited to attend SPC."

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## APPLY FOR SPC SCHOLARSHIPS TODAY!

The general scholarship application is now available for students to complete for the Fall 2018/Spring 2019 school year. The application can be found at: <https://southplainscollege.academicworks.com/>

### DEADLINE FOR SCHOLARSHIPS EXTENDED TO FEBRUARY 18, 2018

SOUTH PLAINS COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS

## Brazilian student grateful for opportunities in America

by RANDI JINES  
Editorial Assitant

**M**any people would love to have the chance to live in tropical areas, but Victoria de Souza Bispo got to experience this.

De Souza lived in Pará, Brazil with her grandparents until she was 14 years old.

"Brazil has a lot of different looks," says de Souza, a freshman at South Plains College. "There's the Brazil that everybody knows, like Rio. But the Brazil that I know is a lot different, because I'm from the Amazon. We have a lot of trees where I come from. But we have big cities like Lubbock, but with way more trees."

De Souza explained that school in Brazil was more difficult, due to having a longer schedule. She explained that it was a lot of pressure but gave her more opportunities and a better chance at getting into college in the United States.

"In high school in Brazil, we learn everything that the United States learns in four years

in one year," de Souza explains. "It is way too much pressure. In Brazil, they have this list, and if you are not on the list, you do not get to go to college. Here, you have a lot of opportunities and a lot of different options. And here we have scholarships and financial aid. In Brazil, we don't have that. You have to pay for it on your own."

When de Souza was 14 years old, she decided to move to Costa Rica to live with her mother. That is where she learned Spanish.

"My mother was living in Costa Rica," recalls de Souza. "I asked my grandparents, because I was living with them, if I could go. So I went to Costa Rica, and I lived there for almost three years."

After living in Costa Rica, learning Spanish and making new friends, her stepfather got the opportunity to study at Texas Tech University in Lubbock.

After moving to a

completely new country, there are adjustments that have to be made. Language and food were her main adjustments, according to

in English as an easy way to learn to speak English. She also said the food was a lot different.

"In Brazil, we eat rice

De Souza says that the biggest opportunities that she has had living in the United States are being able to learn a new language and education. She said it's hard for people to pursue a college education in Brazil.

De Souza, a public relations major, says she chose South Plains because she appreciates having a smaller class.

"I like the small classes because the teachers care about your learning," de Souza added. "So that is something I appreciate, and that's why I wanted to come here. I have a hard time with English, so the teachers have time to talk with me because of the small classes."

Although she has had many opportunities, de

Souza said that she had to face being homesick and being away from her grandparents. She explained that her first year away from Brazil was the hardest. She said that it has gotten better because her grandparents come and visit. But she still gets homesick from time to time.

"I did the first year I was gone," de Souza recalls. "I really wanted to go home because I have a great connection with my grandparents. I grew up with them, so I really miss them. The first year was the hardest because I broke that bond of being with them every day. Right now is not that bad, because they come visit us, so I got happy. Sometimes I sit on my bed and wish I had everybody back around."

De Souza has overcome moving from three different countries and all the baggage that comes along with moving.

"I have met a lot of people from a lot of different countries," de Souza said. "It is something that I have really enjoyed."

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Victoria de Souza Bispo, a freshman public relations major  
AUTUMN BIPPERT/PLAINSMAN PRESS

de Souza. When she first moved to West Texas, she faced language barriers. She explained that she would watch television

and beans and meat," de Souza said, "so when you come here it is a lot different, because they don't eat that much rice."

## Math professor keeps positive outlook despite setbacks

by TINA GONZALEZ  
Feature Editor

Despite experiencing setbacks, Alma Lopez keeps a positive perspective on life.

Lopez spent her first six years of life growing up around Happy, Texas, eventually moving to Dalhart, where she started and finished school. Lopez was involved in her high school, being a part of the debate team and journalism.

"I was even the editor of our high school paper,"

going to college was a big deal for Lopez. Neither of her parents went to college, so being a first-generation student was important to her. Lopez enrolled at Eastern New Mexico University in Portales, New Mexico. She first thought about pre-law.

"I was originally pre-law and thought I would like to become an attorney," recalls Lopez. "I kept taking more and more math and eventually went with my heart."

Despite her ideas for pre-law, Lopez pursued

"I won a scholarship for graduate school, so I stayed on and received my master's degree," said Lopez.

Even in college, Lopez managed to stay involved. "In college, I did everything," said Lopez.

"I participated in clubs that brought concerts and entertainment to the university, tutored, mentored, and worked as a TA."

After getting an offer from Texas A&M, Lopez decided to take a shot at Lubbock. While waiting to hear back from Texas Tech, Lopez found a job at SPC.

"I applied for a job at SPC in the meantime," said Lopez. "I fell in love with the job."

Lopez began her teaching career at SPC in 1993. She says that she loves and appreciates her job.

"You get to learn every single day about people and life," added Lopez.

Lopez has excelled tremendously in her teaching career, having the highest passing rates in the Math Department.

"My favorite class to teach is college algebra," said Lopez. "I absolutely love what I do, and that translates in the classroom."

Lopez who has been teaching in the Math Department the longest, says she has learned to connect with her students through the years.

"Since I have been here for 25 years, I have connected with them a little differently over

the years," said Lopez. "As I have gotten older, I connected with them more as a mother."

Lopez has experienced many trial and tribulations, but she always brings a smile and great attitude to the classroom.

"When you have an instructor that really loves what they do, it makes the classroom a little better environment for learning," said Lopez, who received the Faculty Excellence Award in 2013.

To Lopez, "happiness is a choice." It makes a really big difference in life. Also being grateful about all the ups and downs makes life more enjoyable, she adds.

"If you're grateful for having a job, you don't complain," said Lopez. "It makes me feel happy just being grateful."

Lopez has overcome

bigger obstacles, bigger than what some can imagine.

"Eleven years ago, on the night before Halloween, I found a lump on my chest," said Lopez. "I went to the doctor the next morning. They immediately did a biopsy, and I found out I had cancer."

Despite the news, Lopez still put a smile on her face and took her kids trick-or-treating. Her strong will, great attitude, and family got her through the cancer.

"Five months later, I had finished chemotherapy completely and managed to make it back to work," said Lopez. "It was an aggressive battle, but it was worth it."

Lopez did not let her illness change her attitude when she returned to her job. She had a new

appreciation for her job, realizing that her job was a privilege.

"I was becoming ungrateful and thinking about moving into an administrative role," said Lopez. "When I came back, it just made me appreciate and be so much more grateful for what I have."

Her attitude spreads throughout her classes and lessons to learn from. She still has an amazing outlook on life.

"It was a pure blessing that I got sick," said Lopez, "because I came back and it was like starting over again. I felt the excitement I did in my first year."

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Alma Lopez, professor of mathematics.  
KENDALL RAINER/PLAINSMAN PRESS

said Lopez, professor of mathematics at South Plains College.

After high school,

a bachelor's degree in applied mathematics, with a minor in computer science and statistics.

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# Alum follows dreams playing music around world

**[Editor's note: This story is part of an ongoing project in conjunction with the South Plains College Alumni Association. The project highlights former SPC students and their achievements.]**

by ADÁN RUBIO  
News Editor

Many musicians dream of touring other countries and performing with different bands. For one South Plains College alum, this dream is a reality.

Aaron Smith, a SPC alum with a passion for music, has achieved many milestones throughout his part-time music career. Working as a welder during the day, Smith uses his free time to improve his music abilities and to experience the eventful life of a musician.

His achievements include touring Europe and performing with different local bands and musicians, such as Everything Is Sad and Slow Relics.

Smith, a Levelland native, was always exposed to music growing up with his family and was impacted by this exposure long before attending SPC.

"I kind of just always grew up around music," said Smith. "Between my dad and grandpa playing in the church band, and always having music in the house, it was kind of impossible not to become infatuated."

His family is one influence that Smith mentioned has always been there for him. He described how his family would help him by doing many things, such as driving him and his music gear to the shows

he performed in when he was a kid.

"We always did, and still do, everything together," said Smith. "My parents and sister rule."

After graduating from Levelland High School, Smith continued to pursue his passion for music when he attended SPC from 2006 to 2009. Smith says his time at SPC was filled with its fair share of uncertainty, hard work, and excitement.

When attending SPC, Smith was not sure where to focus his efforts. But his love for music was a driving factor that swayed his focus.

"I had a hard time figuring out what to study,"

"My work load seemed relaxed until I became a music major," said Smith. "Being a music major isn't for the faint of heart. I can still smell those practice rooms."

Regardless of the heavy workload, Smith described his professors as being a huge help when he was faced with a problem.

"The professors were approachable and always ready to be a mentor," said Smith.

Throughout his education at SPC, Smith has received many opportunities to experience things that will aid him in his music endeavors. Smith described SPC as

the network of people I met at SPC."

The experiences gained from SPC and

bass for Everything Is Sad and playing drums for



Aaron Smith playing guitar at Blue Light Live with the band Slow Relics

Smith said, "because I basically wanted to study it all. But my main focus was in Music Education and Political Science."

Despite his uncertainty toward what to study, Smith still enjoyed attending SPC. The campus atmosphere was peaceful, and his work load kept him engaged, especially when he became a music major.

an engaging environment which allowed him to excel within his field of study.

The musical skills and social connections Smith developed at SPC are a few benefits that he mentioned to have impacted his journey in music.

"SPC refined my ear and mechanics," said Smith. "But the biggest impact has probably been

This network of people who impacted Smith had a diverse set of skills that helped him become acquainted with different areas of the music industry.

"I've met other musicians, sound tech guys, writers that I still gladly work with today," said Smith.

The music education, worthwhile relationships, and compassionate professors were all influences that Smith carried with him throughout his music journey. Smith says these college experiences were influential in directing him toward fulfilling his passion for music.

However, his pursuit of his passion was not without some challenges. There were moments of failure and resignation that occurred when he tried to look for different gigs in other parts of Texas.

"I moved from Levelland to Houston for a couple of years," recalls Smith. "I tried and failed to get into any scene over there, so I kind of just let go of playing. I moved back, and it seems like I just fell into it again."

the slight failures are things that Smith mentioned that influenced his path in the music industry. His time at SPC gave him the skills and connections to satisfy his passion and to gain many achievements.

Smith explained that he has reached many milestones in his journey, and that some of them gave him certain opportunities to stand out as a music artist. Some performances allowed him to delve into different techniques.

"I got to open some of the shows on tour acoustically," said Smith.

Smith mentioned that these types of shows were "amazing," as he was able mix up his approach and do things that he does not normally do in a typical performance.

"I like being able to play different styles and different instruments," said Smith.

The opportunity to expand his music abilities is one benefit of performing with different local artists. Playing

Slow Relics and Daniel Payne, a local musician, are the many opportunities that Smith gets to display his multiple music talents.

Yet none of these milestones compares to performing in a tour across Europe. According to Smith, traveling to Europe was the one milestone that stands out from the rest.

"Touring Europe is definitely the biggest milestone for me musically," said Smith.

Throughout every aspect of his life, Smith has displayed a deep passion for music. His education and childhood are just a few things that Smith mentioned to be major contributors in achieving his music goals.

"Honestly, it's because of the SPC network of people," Smith explained as the main reason for his achievements. "I dreamed it, but I didn't think I would be able to do it."

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Plainsman Press

## 'LEGO Marvel 2' offers new features, retains past issues

by ADÁN RUBIO  
News Editor

The world is in peril, and it is up to Earth's mightiest LEGO heroes to save the day once again.

"LEGO Marvel Super Heroes 2" is a new LEGO-based adventure game that tells the story of popular Marvel super heroes, such as the Avengers and the Guardians of the Galaxy, fighting to stop Kang the Conqueror and his plan to take over multiple worlds.

Because I really enjoyed the first installment of "LEGO Marvel," I was excited to play this game and experience all the new features. Compared to the first game and other LEGO games in the past, "LEGO Marvel 2" stands out in many ways.

The main difference between this game and other LEGO games is the atmosphere. In "LEGO Marvel 2," the player travels throughout Kang's forged land of Chronopolis, a hub-world consisting of multiple worlds from different eras and places in the universe.

This new setting offers more than just unique scenery and vast undiscovered areas. With the introduction of new eras and alternate realities comes new playable characters with different abilities.

The game's story consists of original Marvel heroes teaming up with their otherworldly counterparts in order to save every world from Kang's reign. It was really entertaining seeing these well-known characters interact with past and future versions of themselves while also teaming up with characters from different worlds, such as the Inhumans from Attilan.

The character interactions within the story is one of the best aspects of the game, as players can witness some of their favorite heroes teaming up for the first time. But since this game is targeted toward a younger audience, the humor is something an older gamer will probably not enjoy. The original story and

the possibility of playing more diverse characters are things that I really enjoyed throughout the

game. The other defining factor about this game is the gameplay itself.



I have always been a huge fan of the game-play within LEGO games. Any gamer who enjoys a good collectathon game will spend lots of quality time replaying levels and traveling the hub-world

is great for passing time by trying to solve all the puzzles and locating all the collectibles. Even though I was entertained by the countless things to do in this game, the levels and puzzles themselves did not provide much of a challenge. Despite being a game

levels that involve more critical thinking rather than performing a single action. This has always been a problem for the LEGO games. But this game seems to stand out with its own problem.

Most of the side challenges and puzzles try to overcompensate for their

simplicity by extending the length of the challenge. This makes the gameplay boring, and it is throughout the majority of the game.

Other examples of this monotonous gameplay can be seen during the fights against enemies and bosses.

Boss battles in "LEGO Marvel 2" take longer and are duller than the quick and easy boss fights in past LEGO games. I would have enjoyed quicker boss battles with different phases that require the use of different character abilities.

Despite its individual flaws, "LEGO Marvel 2" still holds up as a worthwhile game that anyone can enjoy. Fans of the LEGO games will enjoy the new features and the number of items there are to collect.

I give "LEGO Marvel Super Heroes 2" a 7.5/10.

I give "LEGO Marvel Super Heroes 2" a 7.5/10.

7.5/10

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7.5/10

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7.5/10

## 'Star Wars: Episode VIII' turns the tables in spectacular extravaganza

by ANNIE GOLDEN  
Editorial Assistant

Everyone is ready to take over The First Order, and they will do anything to accomplish that mission.

"The Last Jedi" ventures into a strong, captivating film by building on the history of the original "Star Wars" movies. The movie is an extravaganza that brings in the details and adventures loved by fans in more depth, and shows off the quality and skill of the old and new actors. Seeing new faces and going along on adventures with the cast is refreshing and entertaining.

The action-packed film has the qualities of every good movie, and is close to the hearts of many viewers, considering the talented cast.

The movie was released in memory of Carrie Fisher, who sadly passed away in December 2017, though the new actors such as Rey (Daisy Ridley), Rose Tico (Kelly Marie Tran), Vice Admiral Amilyn Holdo (Laura Dern), and DJ (Benicio del Toro) do not have the honor of being Carrie Fisher, they did catch my attention. Just like the film, they left me wanting more.

The movie brought in \$1.2 billion worldwide by the first week of January 2018, and was the highest-grossing film for 2017 for good reason. What I liked about this addition is there was more effort put into showing the spiritual side of the Expanded Universe.

This is where I saw the talent that the old and new actors have, because it brought emotion and rawness into the movie.

Another thing I enjoyed about the film was the older, well-

Order dreadnought, caused by Poe Dameron (played by Oscar Isaac), when the Resistance flees D'Qar. Slowly but surely, after this impactful counterattack, the action and storyline grasps the viewer's attention by unraveling the plot and path of each of the characters.

But when the story truly takes its first turn is when Rey (played by Daisy Ridley) craves to learn the ways of the Jedi, so she disturbs the well-hidden Luke Skywalker

actor connections made in this film were another big reason I enjoyed this movie so much. It brought out my all of my spiraling emotions, greatest fears, and excitement about what is to come.

The movie answered some unanswered questions from "The Force Awakens," which I'm hoping happens in the next film as well. We found out that Rey's parents are actually just nobodies, like Luke Skywalker's. It was unveiled that Luke's reaction to Rey was not what was expected for some, and their storyline falls together. The film also took a deeper look into Kylo Ren's psyche. Something that made the movie more enjoyable for me was the humorous comments that weren't erased and replaced with action scenes. Having Rey as a lead character was also empowering for me.

Something that brought the movie from a 10 down to an 8.7 for me were the questions left unanswered. With such a long time frame the movie creators had, they could have better portrayed what happened with a few of the details about story points and character decisions. Rey being the main character was the foundation of confusion in some of the scenes, but was not alone. I did like the new ideas and twists that these decisions led to, though. For example, Rey

and Kylo communicate through The Force be-

movies do not, such as actually fearing for the



cause of the Supreme Leader, and can see each other. It is like a spiritual connection. Another impactful and spiritual moment was when Luke made a hologram of himself for a long time while fighting Kylo Ren. Skywalker was struck by the lightsaber, but there was no contact made. This connection is bringing to light things "Star Wars" movies have never shown The Force do, which is intriguing but confusing. The movie gives me impressions that other

characters when they are in danger. This is something I do not see in other movies these days, due to trailers making the movies extremely predictable.

"The Last Jedi" brought uniqueness back into movie releases, but somehow gave a relatable sense to viewers. I give this movie an 8.7 out of 10.

8.7/10

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known actors teaching and guiding the newbies into their roles in the EU.

The movie first captured my attention with the destruction of a First

(Mark Hamill).

Instantly, the pair caught my attention when together because of the undeniable truth that Rey was meant to follow in Luke's shoes. The char-

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# 'The Disaster Artist' offers funny, dramatic take on biopics

by ADÁN RUBIO  
News Editor

Working on a movie set is not easy, especially when Tommy Wiseau is yelling for his line.

"The Disaster Artist" is a biographical movie about the struggles and unfortunate events that plagued the production of "The Room," one of the worst movies ever made.

"The Room" is a movie that has gained a lot of praise through the years for being a terrible film that many people love to hate. "The Disaster Artist," adapted from the book with the same name, recounts the production of this cult phenomenon with an amazing cast and countless hilarious moments.

The movie focuses on Tommy Wiseau (James Franco), the director, producer, and lead actor of "The Room," and his friend and co-star, Greg Sestero (Dave Franco).

Tommy is an arrogant eccentric who has a love for acting, despite the criticism he receives for his obvious lack of talent. He is befriended by Greg, who leans on Tommy to get the confidence he needs to improve his acting skills.

In order to further pursue an acting career, Tommy and Greg move to LA, where they figure out that

becoming a big star is difficult. After countless rejections, Tommy decides to produce "The Room" and pressures Greg to act in his film.

"The Disaster Artist" has a lot of hilarious moments and rarely falls flat when attempting a comedic scene.

The characters each have their own unique qualities that allow them to be funny without trying to force a joke. The actors perform well together and are able to adjust to the few moments of tension and drama that are seen throughout the film.

Seeing these characters trying to produce a film, with Tommy making all the decisions, was very entertaining. Tommy is incompetent and oddly direct when telling the members of his film crew how he wants to create his weird vision. Observing the interactions between Tommy and the rest of the characters really portrays the dread and

peculiarity the crew faced when working to create "The Room."

James Franco does an excellent job at executing his role as Tommy. He is able to depict Wiseau's quirks and outrageous personality while remaining mysterious and slightly disturbing. Franco needs little support from his co-stars when

executing a joke, as his performance already has a sense of weirdness and amusement.

Despite his great performance, the funniest scenes happen when James Franco performs with his co-stars.

When Tommy interacts with Greg and the members of the film crew, the hilarity of the film es-

calates. The actors work great together and have excellent comedic timing when sharing the scene.

However, this is also where the film's humor can fall a little flat. In the few scenes where Tommy is not present, the supporting characters must carry the joke. These moments are not terrible, but lack value compared to the scenes with Tommy.

Even though this movie has a lot of great comedic moments and some intense dramatic moments, the film still lacks some focus.

After the main characters are introduced in the beginning of the film, the focus constantly shifts from one moment to the next with no story arcs other than the complex friendship between Tommy and Greg.

If the movie is going to shift focus to a new scene, it would be nice to focus on the growing tension between Tommy and the other supporting characters. This can allow for more funny scenes that are not quickly executed and forgotten.

Regardless, most of the film's scenes are hilarious and very memorable. But I would have liked to have seen some of the comedic moments last longer or to see a reappearance of

earlier jokes.

Having read the book, I know of the comedic and dramatic potential that this movie can achieve. It is frustrating considering that movies adapted from books are not always the perfect representation of what the book offers.

Most adapted films suffer when presenting a story, as movies have set run times. But this film could have been longer, as its run time was a little less than two hours.

Despite the issues I have with the quick shifts in focus and the lack of quality narratives from the book, I really enjoyed this movie.

Anyone who has read the book can still enjoy this movie, despite multiple story arcs being left out of the plot. Even if one has not read the book, this movie still offers a lot of amusement and a memorable story with entertaining characters. I highly recommend this movie to people who have seen "The Room," or to people who want to learn more about its terrible production.

I give "The Disaster Artist" an 8.5 out of 10.

**8.5/10**

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# 'The Post' entices with compelling, true journalism drama

by TINA GONZALEZ  
Editorial Assistant

"The Post" is a spectacular movie filled with empowerment, drama, and heart.

The movie takes place in the early '70s. The Washington Post, at the time, was just considered a local newspaper striving to catch

up to the New York Times. Katharine Graham, (played by Meryl Streep) the Post's first female publisher, and Ben Bradlee (played by Tom Hanks) were at first not seeing eye to eye but eventually teamed

up to expose the corrupt government and its secrets. The secrets were pages of a study known as the Pentagon Papers that proved the government knew Vietnam War was a failing endeavor but continued sending troops there.

The New York Times was the first to publish parts of the papers soon after, but the government

threatened the publication with a law suit. Since then, Bradlee and others on his news team worked endlessly to obtain copies of the secret documents.

While that is happening, Graham is struggling with other issues. Being the first American woman publisher, Graham had to work through a lot of ste-

documents or do what seemed right at the time and expose the government. At the end, Graham listened to her own voice. The choice she made prevailed, ending in the Post being bigger and better.

Not being born near the early '70s and watching movies that date back to things that really hap-

pened is so intriguing. I am obsessed with history and journalism, and the movie is the perfect combination. For those who weren't born in the '70s, you almost feel like you lived through that time. Everything was different during

a rough time having a woman as a publisher. At that time, it was not heard of that a woman was in power or control. It was a man's world, so having a woman in control made others nervous and skeptical of what she could do. But she proves everyone wrong. Throughout the movie, Graham took every task given to her seriously and took pride in her position as publisher, taking over after the death of her husband.

Everyone chosen for the cast was perfect to play the part. Hanks is amazing, as he did very well playing the driven, outspoken journalist. His team was amazing too. The movie really showed how much heart journalists had and everything they had to go through. There wasn't the Internet

and easy access. There was not computer hackers that could just go through a couple of codes. Face to face action was essential to journalism back then. If you wanted information, you had to have connections, and "The Post" shows just that.

It was incredible to see how brave the New York Times and the Washington Post were to come together to do what's right and exercise First Amendment rights. Exposing political leaders had to be terrifying, but they did it and won a 6-3 decision in front of the Supreme Court of the United States.

The movie definitely kept you on your toes. It was exciting to see how Graham found her own voice and followed her

heart instead of listening to the voices around her. Little did she know that by doing her own thing she impacted many other women. It shows this in the scene after the ruling by the Supreme Court. The NYT was getting all the publicity, but the Post was getting recognized for so much more.

I don't know if it is because I am involved with journalism that I could relate so much more, but it was an amazing prospective movie that I recommend everyone should watch. I give this movie a 10/10.

**10/10**

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reotypical issues that occurred in the '70s. Eventually the Washington Post got a hold of hundreds of documents. After that, it was up to Graham to create a voice of her own and really take the company in her own hands.

Under a lot of pressure from different voices, Graham must make the decision to risk her career and maybe even the company to publish these

that time for women, journalists, and politics.

"The Post" took you back to the struggles people faced during the early '70s, from equality for women and the growing press freedom.

At the time, the New York Times was the main newspaper. Everyone wanted to work there and be on that team.

The movie shows how the Post went through



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## Back Talk: Net neutrality generates debate

### Internet should stay free



by RANDI JINES  
Opinion Editor

The Federal Communications Commission has been trying to do away with net neutrality and begin charging people to use the Internet.

Net neutrality is what keeps the Internet free, as in Twitter, Google, Facebook, and anything else you can name.

Every time I opened up an app, there would be a post about net neutrality, whether it be a meme or a number to text to keep net neutrality. So I decided to text the number one day because social media plays a big part in my life, and hopefully my future, as a journalist.

There are many reasons why net neutrality is around and still is.

The Internet plays a big role in society today. Many people have created jobs solely on being a social media influencer, as in YouTubers or Instagram models. People make their living creating content to post to the Internet. This would put many people out of jobs, because the audience

would shrink. The only people viewing their content would be the people who could afford to pay to use these apps.

As a journalist hoping to work for BuzzFeed one day, the chance of BuzzFeed even being a successful platform anymore would be diminished. This would put many media companies, creators, models, influencers, celebrities, and others out of business. Not everyone can afford to pay to use the Internet.

As an American, I have the freedom of speech, religion, marriage, and to even own a gun. So having to pay to use the Internet that has been free since it was created seems absurd to me. It is suspicious that the government wants us to pay for the Internet once Donald Trump became president. With all of the buzz about President Trump and the endless memes and scandals, it makes sense that the government would try to find a way to make it difficult for people to hear about any of this. But as Americans, we pride ourselves on freedom.

Making us pay for the Internet would be a step in the opposite direction.

Also, the Internet plays a big part in education. In college, you have the student portal, which gives you access to all of your information, from your transcript to student activities. Now imagine paying a fee every time you wanted to access this.

College is expensive. You are expected to pay for tuition, housing, books, access codes, food, and so much more. Many people can barely afford to pay for this. Adding on the cost to pay to use Google, your student portal, your email, the library database, is overwhelming. As a broke college student, if net neutrality is taken away, I do not think I will be able to continue with college, because it is expensive enough as it is.

The Internet has a bad reputation for many reasons, from cyber bullying to fake news. Many people believe that paying to use the Internet would get rid of these problems, but the Internet sheds light on many positive aspects too. Bullying will happen regardless, whether it is online or not. But the Internet has given people a platform to speak up about bullying and help the victims of bullying. For example, I was scrolling through Twitter the other day and I came across a tweet by a social media influencer encouraging his fans to refrain from self-harm. I read the comments, and many people were inspired and encouraged to stay clean. The Internet has been an outlet for many people and brings light to situations that otherwise wouldn't be talked about.

Net Neutrality is important in keeping our rights as Americans. No one should have to pay for these things when it has been free since it was created.

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### Advantages could come from paying for Internet



by TINA GONZALEZ  
Feature Editor

Everyone is going crazy about the idea of net neutrality and having to pay for the Internet.

But in some respects, net neutrality has some beneficial qualities. Of course, for corporations and busi-

ness, but not as much as many people use it.

The world has completely taken advantage of the Internet, using it for all the wrong reasons: acknowledging all the wrong people, not using it for educational purposes, and becoming absolutely obsessed with a world that most people hide behind.

If net neutrality happens, the Internet could potentially be faster. Only the people who truly need the Internet will pay for it. So, the people using it for pointless reasons such as to let the world know that he or she is at the mov-

ies will cease to be on the Internet.

Another thing to think about is that a lot of young children are on social media. Most of the time, the parents aren't even aware, because it's the normal thing to have, but it is not doing any good. Kids aren't going outside. They end up hiding behind screens and avoiding face-to-face interaction, which does not help their social skills. If there was net neutrality, kids wouldn't pay to have the Internet, so it would keep them off things that they shouldn't be on.



ness, it may not be all in their favor, but that is not why net neutrality should happen.

It is not a surprise that the social world we live in is completely different from even 15 years ago. And it hasn't really changed for the better. Maybe it is just my old-fashion tendencies, but young adults, teens and even kids are so obsessed with the Internet and social media it has gotten to the point where it's the first thing we look at in the morning and the last thing we see at night. I do use social media and the

ies will cease to be on the Internet.

Companies think they would not make money, but actually they could really benefit. A company could come up with bundle packages and things of that sort. For example, people on airplanes are willing to pay big bucks for access to the Internet. Why? Because it is not directly accessible. We have gotten so use to having the Internet that when people don't have it right then and there, they will do what is needed to have it. They could maybe take a moment to look up from

For students and people who need the Internet, such as doctors or professors, it should be accessible at all times, provided by their employers. However, it has become an overwhelming obsession for most people.

People are upset about the idea of paying for the Internet, only because we have gotten too attached to having it for granted. Even though with free Internet news can travel faster, the Internet should be used at the right capacity.

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## Word On The Street

### How do you feel about Net Neutrality?



"I feel like the revoking of Net Neutrality was motivated by money, more than an actual desire to make the Internet free and open again. With the motives that are being given, it won't help the Internet in any way. It is going to be a hassle for everyone, and it is just a huge money grab for the people involved."

Kyle Green  
Freshman  
Psychology  
Lubbock, Texas



"I think that it would be really wrong to have to pay for things like social media. Because college students have to focus on other necessities, like paying for gas and their college tuition."

Brenden Vaughn  
Sophomore  
Psychology  
Lubbock, Texas



"I like the way the Internet was before, and if it had stayed the same, I would have been happy."

Elliot Lyford  
Sophomore  
Spanish  
Lubbock, Texas



"I believe that Net Neutrality is important because it allows us to exercise our First Amendment rights to speak freely on the Internet, and we shouldn't have to pay for that."

Aaron Winger  
Freshman  
Sound Technology  
Lubbock, Texas



"I think Net Neutrality is really important because the Internet isn't something that people should have to pay for, other than the signal they have to pay for to access it. I think the Internet is meant to be open to anyone who wanted access to it, and I don't think you should have to pay for that."

Joseph Raney  
Sophomore  
Sound Technology  
Lubbock, Texas

Compiled by Meghan Arnold and Kendall Rainer

# Family defined by meaningful relationships, not genetics



by MEGHAN ARNOLD  
Editorial Assistant

Typically, you are raised by the people who gifted you life on this Earth. But it's entirely up to you regarding who you call family.

I grew up never knowing how it felt having a mother and father in the same household, at the same time. I'm not going to lie. It was confusing at times, trying to grasp why my family was different. At times, I felt lonely and yearned for the typical two-parent household. I

wanted what I thought was a good, normal life.

Living with my single mother in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, while my dad was living miles away in San Antonio, Texas, I really began to feel the separation in my family. It was a struggle visiting my father only during the occasional breaks a student receives each year. Summer was always my favorite time, because it allowed me to see my dad for a couple of months versus a week or two.

Summer always consisted of fun in the sun and week-long camping trips



with my dad. Even though it was fun and memorable, I still wished I had a huge family to share it with.

It was in the summer of 2012 when I made an extraordinary discovery. When I was walking off

the airplane to greet my father, there was a group of people standing beside him. At that moment, my dad decided to introduce me to my soon-to-be stepmother and her three children. At first, it may have been a shock. But it was also one of the best things that ever happened to me.

Getting to know my soon-to-be family was a dream come true. Trying to learn about Joe,

Makayla, and Amanda (soon-to-be siblings) not only gave me knowledge about them but also created a connection between us. I heard their stories of just having their mother and not knowing their father. They grew up very similar to the way I did, and it was very comforting having these things in common.

Seeing my dad be in love with his girlfriend

and building a life together made me happy. It was like watching a dream come true.

All the school breaks I spent with my father made me learn a life lesson. They might not be blood related to me, but they are as much my family as my father.

Blood doesn't make a family; it's the bond you share with each other. All the obstacles we overcame, and the quality time we shared, made us the big family I always yearned for. They were always there for me, and I was always there for them.

It was this experience that allowed me to learn that family isn't limited. Family is infinite! Blood is only the root that helps a family grow.

You can live life and not even realize the strong bonds you are forming with others. You might sit down one day and see how many people are there for you. Then you realize how large your family really is, and how large it could be.

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## Aggressive police tactics degrade, harm without justification



by CALEB BROWN  
Staff Writer

In America, law enforcement can sometimes be too aggressive. This is especially true in the lower income neighborhoods.

I understand that's where most crime is, but the police need to understand just because you live in a low-income neighborhood does not automatically make you a criminal. They should

blocks away. As I'm turning the corner, a white unmarked police car pulls up right next to me. I didn't know what to think. My heart just dropped. I was a little imitated at first, then grew angry as he started interrogating me and asked where I was going.

What made me realize he was harassing me was when he finally told me his reason for stopping me. He said I fit the description of a burglary suspect, which obviously was not true. I mean, seriously, I'm in a wheelchair and have dreads. How many people could there possibly be in the area that look like me? I could have escalated the situation and made it worse, but I just kept my mouth shut. After what felt like the longest five minutes of my life,

It's not just minorities who have been killed, it's also the mentally ill. People wonder why minorities have a very hard time trusting law enforcement.

I understand that being a police officer is a hard job, and I'm not trying to bash police or talk bad about them. I have friends and family who are in law enforcement. They tell me what it's like being a cop and their perspective

I know they are trained to make quick decisions, but I don't think their first instinct should be to pull their firearm or already have it drawn. I think they should go through more psychological training. Police officers who are college educated are less likely to use force. There are countries in Europe that require police officers to be college educated. I

## Playful challenge sparks unnecessary publicity, harm



by AUTUMN BIPPERT  
Editor-in-Chief

What started out as an internet joke has gone too far.

The "Tide Pod Challenge" can be seen all over the Internet, from Youtube, to Facebook, to Reddit, and other places.

This "challenge" started out as a joke. Someone said that Tide Pods looked like they would be satisfying to bite into. Then the Internet does what it always does and took things too far. At first, it was small things, such as a picture of a Tide Pod on a plate.

But eventually people started to wonder what it would actually be like to eat one.

Seriously, who wonders what it's like to bite into a Tide Pod? It is laundry detergent. Is this

what the world has come to, eating laundry detergent? Apparently we're all children again, and we forgot that it's extremely unsafe to ingest laundry detergent.

I get that it was a joke. It was funny for a little while, when it was just pictures on the Internet. But now people are suffering serious injury from this.

On the box for Tide Pods, it says to keep out of the reach of children and also includes what to do if ingested.

"If a product is swallowed, drink a glass of water or milk and contact the Poison Control Center (1-800-222-1222) or doctor immediately. Do not induce vomiting."

They make it very clear that it is dangerous to ingest. So why do people still think it would be fine if they just took a big bite out of one?

So what happens to your body if you're dumb enough to take a bite out of one?

First, the casing that holds the detergent is coated with a special substance called Bitrex (aka denatonium benzoate) to stop children from eating

them. This causes the first bite to taste bitter, and your body may respond with nausea, preparing you to throw up before you even swallow.

When the liquid detergent comes in contact with you, it coats the cells that make up the outer layer membrane of your tongue. This pH kills the cells on contact. This begins a burning feeling in your mouth, causing a chemical burn, but not a physical one.

So if all that isn't bad enough, you could cause permanent damage to your mouth.

If you take it another step farther and swallow, there's even more damage you can cause. The back of your throat might begin to burn and swell, causing your throat to contract and close. Because this is the only path for oxygen to travel to the lungs, and the only route for carbon dioxide to exit the body, this will make you feel short of breath. In response, your impulse may be to inhale quickly or deeply. Paired with a lack of oxygen, you'll get tired out easily.

By the time liquid from just one Tide Pod gets to your lower gastrointestinal tract, the concentration of the detergent will have reduced and will likely leave the lower esophagus, stomach, and intestines unscathed. However, in some cases, your stomach may produce extra acid, causing the sensation of heartburn and other irritation.

So is making a stupid internet joke really worth it? I just don't understand why you would take a joke that far, knowing that it will cause you harm.

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not profile people based off the way they look or dress, because it hurts the trust of the community.

I'm not ashamed to admit I come from a pretty rough neighborhood. I have learned a lot and seen a lot. I would see friends of mine get manhandled and degraded by police, then get arrested for resisting. Even I would get harassed by the police. My friends and I would be walking to school and would get stopped on the way. They would always say we looked suspicious, or even for something as little as walking on the street.

There was one time I'll never forget. I was by myself on the way to a friend's house just four

he finally let me go on my way.

That was not even half of my experiences with the cops. I could go on forever, but I won't. I don't really let my bad encounters with police bring me down, because I know it may happen again. I know some have it worse, or have been gunned down by police. It happens all over the country, year after year. You could almost call it an epidemic, as much as it happens.

According to the Guardian, more than 200 unarmed black males were killed in 2016 alone, and six out of 10 blacks have claimed to have been harassed by the police. That's just unacceptable.

think that's very necessary so that they can understand why people do what they do and be more understanding rather than be so quick to use force, or assuming someone is a criminal just because of their appearance.

I know not all cops are bad, and most are just doing their job. But I think there needs to be more about this and stop pretending it's not happening. Otherwise the police brutality will never end. Everyone deserves the same respect from police officers. The color of your skin should not matter.

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# 'Activist Mommy' should not blame sexual assault victims



by RANDI JINES  
Editorial Assistant

Recently, I was scrolling through Facebook when I came across a video by "Activist Mommy." I decided to watch it because it had to do with the Me Too Campaign.

If you are not familiar with the campaign, it has to do with sexual assault victims who are speaking up about their assault experiences. The hash tag "#metoo" is bringing awareness to the fact that no sexual assault victim is alone.

The first point that this lady made was that some of these victims are, in fact, not victims. The problem with this claim is that this lady does not know what happened or the details of the incident, so it is not her place to tell someone whether they are victims of sexual assault.

Her next claim is that if a boss invites you back to his hotel room, it means he only wants one thing, and every woman should know this. In the Hollywood film industry, the cast may travel out of town to film. For a woman starting out in this industry, it would be easy to mistake a person in charge inviting you back to their hotel room to discuss professional matters.

Although it is unlikely, it would be an easy mistake to make, but that does not mean these women were asking to be assaulted or were perfectly fine with what went down. What took place behind those closed hotel doors, no one knows about. So this lady has no place to claim that these women are not victims but were asking for it.

One of the major points of rape culture and the Me Too campaign is that women who are victims of sexual assault are not to blame for what happened to them. There may have been misjudgment or poor decisions, but at the end of the day, no victim of sexual assault should be faulted for

what happened.

The next point Activist Mommy made was that if a man tries to force himself upon you, "kick him in the nuts, gouge his eyes, scream, run, report it to the police immediately, who will find the hurt man and arrest him." There are many flaws in this point she tried to make. There are many possibilities when sexual assault happens. In a scenario where a woman is slipped drugs, she has no control over her body and is physically unable to fight back. Most likely, she will not remember the events that took place. This statement is probably the most insensitive point made, because in the moment it is hard

to be a hero. But a victim who is speaking up about sexual assault, rape, or inappropriate touching, or who are reaching out to victims who are too scared to speak up about what happened or may still be happening are also heroes. Any victim bringing light to the situation and letting other victims know they are not alone by using the Me Too Campaign are heroes.

One person speaking up about what happened could save a life, and the fact that now more and more women are speaking up using the Me Too campaign proves that these victims are heroes.

For so long, most of these victims were too

claims that most of these victims were, in fact, not victims but just slept their way to the top. She claims that if the boss determines whether to keep your job based on sexual favors, then just quit.

The problem with this statement is most of the time the victims won't lose their job based on the sexual favors they will do for them, but whether they will snitch about the sexual acts they were forced to do. No one has the place to tell someone whether they are a victim other than the people who physically witnessed the abuse. Activist Mommy does not have the understanding and enough facts to say that these women

that these victims are guilty, but that they are now "sluts." It amazes me that someone who has spent years dealing with this trauma and finally decided to speak up is now being called offensive names.

According to Activist Mommy, all of this harassment could have stopped with a simple "no." In Hayek's statement, she explained how many times she said no to doing favors for Weinstein. Activist Mommy makes it seem like anyone who has ever experienced sexual harassment or assault just simply could not say no, which is not true in the slightest.

Next, she mentions

other victims and survivors. Love is not about pressure, but about acceptance. As I keep up with this campaign and people's stories, I have not witnessed any hateful remarks among victims and survivors, only from people who have not dealt with these struggles. This movement is more about love than it is about separating men and women. This movement is not strictly for women who have been sexually assaulted, but also men and boys who were assaulted or harassed.

She ends her video saying this "Me Too" movement was created to "ruin a man over allegations that can't be proven and making all men out to be perverts." No man who uses his power over women to force them against their will for his own pleasure should not be allowed to even walk the streets as a free man. When there has been multiple women come forward about the abuse they faced from one man, there does not need to be any physical evidence.

Not all men are perverts, but not all of them are innocent. The same goes for women. I do not understand how Activist Mommy can believe that these victims are lying and are just out to ruin men. Not all of these victims are women, but a majority is because men can easily overpower women. Some men are capable of abusing women, especially men with power. Not all men would even consider treating women this way. This movement is not a fight about women being superior to men, but giving victims of sexual assault a voice and a safe place to come forward about the abuse.

This video made me incredibly angry because someone was able to turn a positive and empowering movement into something negative and call victims nasty names, claiming it's just for attention. So many victims who come forward to someone in authority about abuse at home or from someone close to them are told that they are only doing this for attention.

One out of every six women is a victim of sexual assault. This movement is not about attention, but letting victims know that it is OK to speak up, and that you are not alone. The struggles that these victims face impact their whole life. This movement is a great way to show that it could impact your life in a positive way.

All of these victims who spoke up about their abuse are strong and even inspiring. This movement is one of the most important movements that is going on today, because it is about becoming a strong survivor instead of just a victim.

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for women to fight back. Not everyone is prepared at any moment to fight off sexual assault.

Most of the sexual assault reports are overlooked by police unless there is physical proof on the woman's body of it happening. If a woman fights against a man and leaves him with wounds and no physical damage on herself, the man could easily claim he was the one assaulted. Because of people such as Activist Mommy, the authorities would believe the hurt man rather than the woman. Also, women, especially in Hollywood, do not report the assault because the man in charge could easily threaten them with their job or convince them that no one would ever believe them.

She ends her statement about reporting the assault to the police that the victim will be a hero. Of course, a woman who fought back and got to the police immediately would

scared to speak up about what was happening, and what was happening to them was not OK. The campaign has brought so many survivors' stories to light because they finally realized they were not alone.

Every victim who has spoken up about their story is a hero. It angers me that some ignorant lady on Facebook has to take such a positive and uplifting campaign and call "bull" just because they were not able to fight back or were too scared to report the assault. It does not matter when a victim decides to speak up about it. What matters is that they finally decide to speak up about it and let other victims know they are not alone. These victims will always be heroes in my eyes.

"What happened to taking a stand for what's right?" asked Activist Mommy, as she explains that these "fake victims" were just sleeping their way to the top. This lady

are just making it all up.

The "Me Too" movement is a great way for victims and survivors to tell their story. They encourage others going through the same thing to keep their head up and stand up for themselves. This movement is about victims and survivors finally speaking up and using their voice to finally bring light to the situation. If that is not standing up for what matters, then I do not know what is.

Activist Mommy mentioned the first person she claimed was guilty rather than a victim. Salma Hayek came out about her alleged sexual harassment by Harvey Weinstein. He would harass her and claim she was a nobody, but he gave her a shot anyway. Activist Mommy claimed Hayek was guilty rather than a victim because of a lesbian sex scene in one of her films. This lady believes that someone who shoots a sexual scene for a movie is not a victim of sexual harassment because "how slutty is that?"

Hayek explained in her statement about why she agreed to do this scene. He would not stop harassing her after she put five years of effort into this film. It is understandable that she would agree to do this so she could finally be done with the film and escape her monster.

This whole idea that women who are not pure and innocent cannot be sexually harassed or assaulted is completely wrong. She has not only claimed

Addie Collins. Addie Collins' scandal has nothing to do with the "Me Too" campaign. She confessed about her affair with Matt Lauer, formerly of the "Today Show" on NBC-TV. She never claimed she was a victim, but instead that she was guilty. Activist Mommy made remarks like "he didn't hold a gun to your head." Although this wasn't a sexual assault situation, sexual assault can happen without deadly weapons being held to one's head. I'm not sure what point Activist Mommy is trying to make, other than the fact that she has no knowledge about sexual assault.

She begins to ease toward the end of her video by explaining that everyone is at the point where "we're rolling our eyes about the next sexual harassment victim." The whole point of the "Me Too" movement is to give victims a voice and be able to speak up about what happened to them in a safe environment. No one coming forward about the struggles they faced should be greeted with an eye roll. Just because more and more people are coming forward about sexual assault does not mean that it's fake or they're guilty. That is the whole point of this campaign, to give people back the voice that was taken away from them.

Activist Mommy also claims that this is an assault on natural love between men and women. Since when was being forced and harassed sexually, or groped sexually, considered natural love? This movement is all about having love for

## WHAT'S REALLY GOING ON WITH



## Texans start conference play off strong

by MADDIE BENAVIDEZ  
Editorial Assistant

The South Plains College men's basketball team started the first month of the Western Junior College Athletic Conference play strong, winning four out of five games.

The Texans had a three-game winning streak snapped with an unfortunate 95-80 loss to conference leaders Odessa College on Jan. 29 in Odessa.

The Texans took a 34-31 lead in the first half against the Wranglers, but the Wranglers dominated the second half by scoring 64 more points.

Sophomore De-Shawn Corprew was the leading scorer with 22 points.

Sophomore Raymond Doby collected his second double-double of the year with 16 points and 11 rebounds.

Sophomore Ben Perez chipped in 10 points, while Christopher Orlina and Jordan Brangers were close behind with nine points each.

The loss brought the Texans' overall season record to 14-6.

The Texans had an easier time against the Clarendon College Bulldogs on Jan. 25, pulling away for an 81-55 victory at home.

SPC held the Bulldogs to 28-percent shooting from the field for the game and forced 12 turnovers with strong defense.

Perez led the Texans with 17 points, including three three-pointers.

Isaiah Maurice, a forward out of North Carolina, recorded his third double-double of the season with 14 points and an impressive 13 rebounds.

It took two free throws by Perez in the final three seconds for the Texans to pull out a 78-76 victory against Western Texas College on Jan. 18 at the Texan Dome.

By the end of the first half, Western Texas held a 41-35 lead. The West-erners were able to maintain their lead until late in



SPC wins against Clarendon College on Jan. 25.  
JORDAN PATTERSON/PLAINS-MAN PRESS

game at 76-76 on a basket and a free throw by Doby with 1:27 left to play in the second half.

Western Texas had possession of the ball after a timeout when Perez, a guard from San Diego, stole the ball for the Texans and got fouled. Perez then sank both shots to

ans with a career-high 27 points. Perez finished with 13 points, while Isaiah Maurice and Doby were close behind with 12 and 11 points, respectively.

Maurice and Doby both hit double-doubles to push the Texans to a 69-58 victory against New Mexico Junior College on Jan. 15 in Hobbs, New Mexico.

SPC shot well against the Thunderbirds, hitting 49.2 percent of their shots from the field.

Maurice put up 13 points and 14 rebounds, while Doby tallied 12 points and 10 rebounds.

Corprew, a Texas Tech signee, netted 12 points to go with his seven rebounds. Also, William Washington pitched in 10 points and four rebounds in under 22 minutes.

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## Rough start for Lady Texans in WJCAC play

by MADDIE BENAVIDEZ  
Editorial Assistant

The South Plains College women's basketball team started off shaky with multiple losses in the first month of Western Junior Texas College Athletic Conference play.

The face-off against

Christina Baker tossed in 12 points and La'Praisjah Johnson had nine points and grabbed seven rebounds. Gabbie Green finished with seven points.

SPC battled with Clarendon College for three quarters on Jan. 25 at the Texan Dome before Clarendon pulled away in the

with 15 points. Christina Baker chipped in 12 points, while Haleigh Hill and Kuehne each added seven points.

The Lady Texans notched their first victory in conference play on Jan. 18 by slipping past Western Texas College 53-51 at the Texan Dome.

The team took turns leading in the first half, before SPC grabbed a 29-27 lead by the end of the second quarter.

Western Texas took a 43-42 lead by the end of the third quarter. But in the fourth quarter, the Lady Texans were determined to put an end to a three-game losing-streak.

A free throw by Carara Samuals of Western Texas tied the game at 49 with less than two minutes left in the final quarter. But SPC pulled ahead with four consecutive points, including a pair of free throws by Johnson.

Johnson had a great night with 14 points, 11 rebounds, and two assists. Govan also had 14 points, while Baker added 10 points.

The Lady Texans saw their conference record dip to 1-5 following a 63-49 loss to the New Mexico Junior College Lady Thunderbirds on Jan. 15 in Hobbs, New Mexico.

Green scored in double digits for the 12<sup>th</sup> time this season, leading SPC with 13 points, while Govan added 10 points and five rebounds.

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A Lady Texans goes aloft for a shot against Clarendon College on Jan. 25.  
JORDAN PATTERSON/PLAINS-MAN PRESS

Odessa College on Jan. 29 unfortunately didn't end in the Lady Texans' favor, as the Lady Wranglers held on for a 60-57 victory in Odessa.

Turnovers seemed to put SPC in trouble, as Odessa scored 17 points off turnovers alone.

Despite the turnovers, the Lady Texans kept fighting, paced by a season-high 27 points from freshman Mikayla Kuehne.

fourth period and left with a 65-52 victory.

The Lady Texans held a 35-34 advantage with 2:11 left in the third quarter before Clarendon responded with an 18-3 run.

The Lady Texans fought back to within eight points of the Lady Bulldogs in the fourth quarter but could not close the gap.

Chantel Govan, a freshman guard out of San Antonio, led SPC

## Track teams start indoor season strong

by KENDALL RAINER  
Photo Editor

The South Plains College men's and women's track and field teams started the 2018 indoor track season off by earning 26 national-qualifying marks while competing at the Red and Black Open.

The meet was held on Jan. 26 at the Sports Performance Center on the campus of Texas Tech University in Lubbock.

Sophomore Omotayo Abolaji placed sixth in the women's 60-meter run with a time of 7.76, earning a national qualification. Abolaji earned a second qualification in the women's 200 meters with a time of 25.08, finishing eighth overall.

In the women's 400

qualification and placed third overall with a time of 8.93.

Freshman Janiel Moore, Moody, Hughes, and McDonald competed in the women's 4x400 meter relay, earning a national qualification and a second-place finish with a time of 3:49.01.

Freshman Ruth Usoro placed first in the long jump, earning a national qualification, with a mark of 19-feet, 8 inches. Freshman Cha'Kaylin Gilbert earned a national qualification with a mark of 17-feet, 11 inches, placing sixth overall.

In the men's competition, Brandon Letts and Andre Edwards placed in the top 10 in the men's 60-meter run. Letts placed fifth with a time of 6.91, while Edwards was close

ners in the top 15 in the men's mile run. Andrew Bosquez earned a national qualification with a second-place finish and a time of 4:18.53. Jesse Madrid finished 12th with a time of 4:34.57, and Film-on Beyene finished 15th with a time of 4:36.24.

Two teams from SPC competed in the men's 4x400 meter relay. Charles, Willari Watson, Atkinson, and Hood, placed second with a time of 3:11.96, while William Watson, Myles Scott, Freeman, and Ray-an Holmes placed sixth with a time of 3:21.03.

In the high jump, freshman Asani Hylton cleared the bar at 6-7.5, earning a national qualification and placing third overall.

In the men's pole vault, freshman Parker Wood



The Texan and Lady Texan track teams earned 26 national qualification marks at the Red and Black Open at Texas Tech on Jan. 26.  
RANDI JINES/PLAINS-MAN PRESS

meter finals, sophomore Natassha McDonald placed first overall and earned a national qualification with a time of 55.09. In the mile run, two SPC runners placed in the top 10, as sophomore Sesselia Dala placed fifth overall with a time of 5:12.40, where sophomore Leslie Romero placed 10th with a time of 5:25.52.

Dala and Romero also earned national qualifications in the women's 3000-meter run. Dala placed second overall with a time off 10:40.18, while Romero placed fourth after crossing the finish line with a time of 10:58.72. In the women's 60-meter hurdles, freshman Patrice Moody earned a national

qualification and placed fourth in the men's 200-meter run with a time of 22.15, while Keion Sutton placed sixth with a time of 22.40.

Sophomore Junior Charles placed first in the men's 400-meter run with a time of 47.95, earning a nation qualification. Jordan Atkinson placed fourth in the same race with a time of 49.93. Montel Hood and Dekaryea Freeman both earned national-qualifying marks in the men's 800-meter run. Hood placed third with a time of 1:57.40, and Freeman was close behind in fourth place with a time of 1:57.47.

SPC had three run-

cleared the bar at 14-5.25, placing fifth overall and earning a national qualification. In the men's long jump, D'Juan Martin placed fourth with a jump of 21-11.75, while Jonathan Witt finished sixth with a jump of 21-4.

In the men's triple jump, Danylo Molchanov placed second with a jump of 49-6.25, earning a national qualification. Freshman Markim Felix placed first overall in the men's shot put with a throw of 49-11.75, earning a national qualification as well.

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## Texans



Jordan Brangers



Jamir Coleman



Deshawn Corprew



Raymond Doby



Asuquo Efreteui



Isaiah Maurice



Keith McGee



Chris Orlina



Ben Perez



Marcel Thompson



Will Washington



Christian Wilson



MyKhailo Yagodin

## Lady Texans



Christina Baker



Maddie Dorris



Gabbie Green



Chantel Govan



Haleigh Hill



Chelsea Hunter



La'Praisjah Johnson



Mikayla Kuehne



Ravae Payne



Alexis Popham