

# ACP 2023 Contest Submission

## 2A: Two-Year School, Reporter of the Year

### Submission

**SCHOOL:** Dallas College Brookhaven Campus

**NOMINEE:** Andrea Olan

### Submission Contents

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# Andrea Olan

Grand Prairie, TX

[andreaolanhdez@gmail.com](mailto:andreaolanhdez@gmail.com)

4698660860

Detail-oriented team player with strong organizational skills. Ability to handle multiple projects simultaneously with a high degree of accuracy.

## Work Experience

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### **Managing Editor**

The Brookhaven Courier

February 2023 to Present

(2 months)

- Oversee and coordinate publication's editorial activities in coordination with the editor
- Handled final proofreading, copy editing and revision functions for deliverables
- Assign newspaper production tasks and follow up on missing deadlines
- Determined readiness of written pieces, made changes, and approved final versions for publication.
- Edit and verify edited stories
- Checked reference sources to verify dates, facts and statistics
- Communicated directly with writers to collaboratively assess work and guide editorial improvements

### **Copy Editor**

The Brookhaven Courier

August 2022 to February 2023

(7 months)

- Ensured content adheres to the in-house and AP style guide
- Stayed abreast of the latest media trends and content best practices
- Compiled and updated style guides as required
- Collaborated with team to come up with fresh and creative ideas, keeping the audience in mind
- Ability to manage multiple projects and consistently meet deadlines
- Suggested improvements to content to enhance quality and accuracy.

### **Social Media Recruiter**

K96 Marketing

September 2021 to April 2022

(8 months)

- Managed recruitment for clients and kept campaign staffed in the Dallas office
- Worked on job descriptions and advertising on social media, interviewed, hired, and onboard employees for the company on a weekly period
- Oversaw social media presence and aligned posts to include branding and trending ideas.
- Cultivated strong corporate image and identity with clear branding.
- Managed social media accounts such as TiKTok and Instagram to innovate recruitment methods

## **Digital Marketing/ Community Manager**

Stroopwaffles Honduras

May 2020 to July 2021

(1 year 3 months)

- Provided marketing strategies meeting the needs of the client, while targeting the aimed audience
- Coordinated with design and media teams to develop high-quality creative assets.
- Managed social media accounts for clients, generating interest for existing and upcoming product or service releases.
- Created a brand board, creating a new image for the brand, while keeping it true to its ideals and vision.

## **Customer Service Agent**

Allied Global

August 2020 to September 2020

(2 months)

- Assisted 100+ customers daily, ensuring their services were up to company standards
- Identified the different products and services offered by the company that matched customer needs
- Actively listened to customers, handled concerns quickly, and escalated major issues to supervisor.
- Facilitated communications through management of inbound and outbound customer calls.
- Maintained customer satisfaction with forward-thinking strategies focused on addressing customer needs and resolving concerns.

## Education

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### **Associate of Arts in AA, Communication and Media Studies**

Dallas College

September 2021 to Present

## Skills

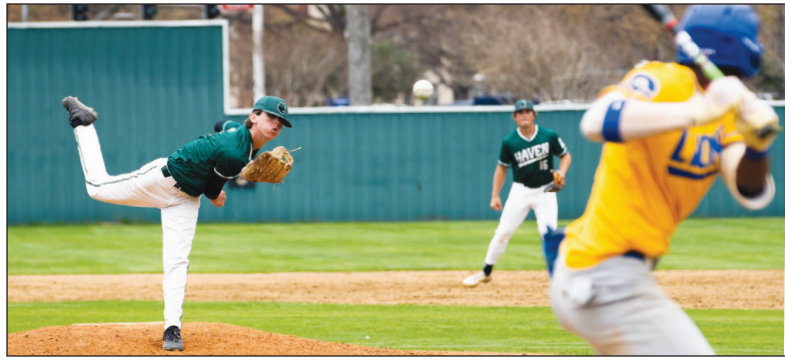
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- Writing
- Customer Experience
- Social Media
- Proofreading
- Writing skills
- Copy editing
- Communication skills

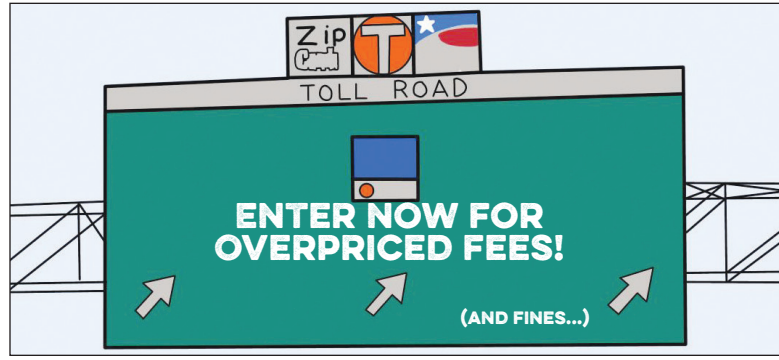
## Links

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<http://linkedin.com/in/andrea-olan-99778a223>



**Bears Baseball** A play-by-play from victory to loss, *Page 6*



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**The Last of Us** Video game adaptation tests positive among fan base, *Page 4*



# THE BROOKHAVEN COURIER

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## Fentanyl continues to kill students

Early College High School at Brookhaven Campus informs parents and students of the dangers of fentanyl March 4.

By **Andrea Olan**  
Managing Editor

Three deaths and 10 overdose cases have been reported in students from the Carrollton-Farmers Branch Independent School District since September 2022, according to the Department of Justice.

Parents and students attended a presentation on March 4, held at BHC and hosted by the Early College High School Parent Teacher Student Association, seeking explanations and answers about the rising

cases of fentanyl overdoses.

Fentanyl is an opioid used for pain relief and anesthesia in hospitals. Fentanyl is 100 times more powerful than morphine and 50 times more potent than heroin, according to the Drug Enforcement Agency.

Eduardo A. Chávez, special agent in charge with DEA Dallas, was the speaker for the presentation. "Fentanyl is unlike any drug we have seen in past years," Chávez said. "This is a topic that is very important to us."

Chávez has 23 years of experience with ongoing leadership in

investigations on recent overdose cases in the area. Chávez said it is important to inform vulnerable family members of the dangers of fentanyl. During his presentation, Chávez switched between English and Spanish to accommodate all attendees present.

"In a medical situation they'll put it in an IV, they'll liquify it and give it in small dosages," Chávez said. "But its natural form is a white powder." The most common form in which fentanyl is sold is pills. Illegal manufacturers are producing them

with indistinguishable differences to oxycodone or Xanax pills.

Chávez said fentanyl's effect on the body is relaxation and pain relief. Unlike cocaine or methamphetamine, fentanyl causes sedation, respiratory depression and decreases heart pulsations. "It blocks the pain receptors to your brain," Chávez said. "You

won't get the typical high you get from methamphetamine."

Illicit fentanyl is manufactured in China. The raw product is then shipped to Mexico, where drug trafficking organizations convert them into pills, according to the DEA. Chávez said the profit margin is attractive to resellers, since the price range for one pill is \$10 - \$30.

"We have never seen any drug with such a small dose causing this many deaths," Chávez said. According to a report published by the Journal of the American Medical Association, 77% of adolescent drug overdose deaths in 2021 were related to fentanyl.

Chávez showed a two gram packet of sugar to the attendees. He said with two grams of fentanyl, illicit manufacturers could make up to one thousand pills. "One thousand people could die if this was fentanyl," he

• **Fentanyl**, *Page 7*



Photo by Trennt Rhea

The Early College Center construction site on the east side of Brookhaven Campus March 28.

## ECCHS to receive new V Building

By **Gabriela X. Zuniga**  
Copy Editor

New construction at Dallas College Brookhaven Campus continues. W Building, previously Brookhaven's workforce building,

is being renovated, and additions are being made. V Building will be a new addition to Brookhaven Campus.

Construction began in February 2022 on the northeast side of Brookhaven for the use of

Early College High School students. These buildings were named the Early College Center. ECC will house Carrollton-Farmers Branch ISD Early College High School

• **ECHS**, *Page 7*

## International student enrollment soars by 84%

By **Andrea Olan**  
Managing Editor

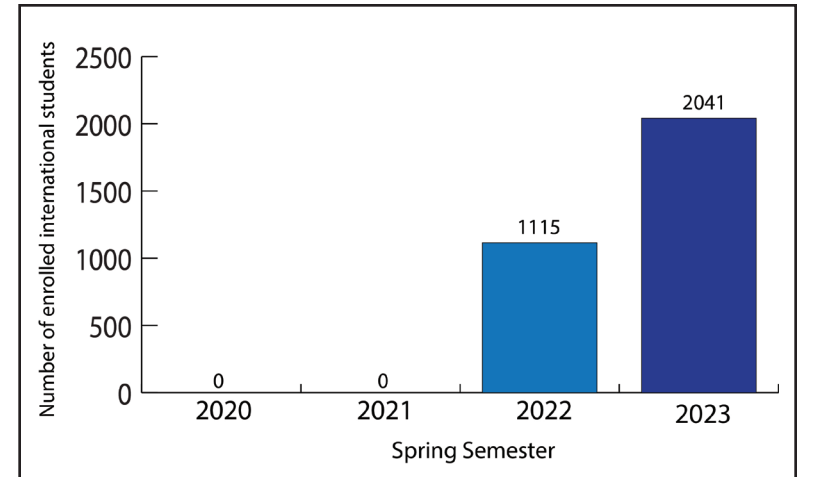
In Spring 2023, 2,041 F-1 students were enrolled in a certificate or undergraduate degree at Dallas College. This was an 84% increase from the previous year, according to a report provided by Quenton Lowery, a Brookhaven Campus designated school officer for registration and admissions. In Spring 2022, 1,115 F-1 international students were enrolled at Dallas College.

The F-1 visa allows international residents to enter the U.S. as full-time students at a certified college, university or other academic institution. After earning their degree, students must return to their home country or find a job that will sponsor them to work in the U.S. after graduation.

Dallas College experienced a decline in F-1 students seeking a certificate or degree in Fall 2020. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, in 2020, 0% of enrolled students at Dallas College were F-1 visa holders.

Lowery said the COVID-19 pandemic halted enrollment for F-1 students, bringing it to 0% for three semesters during lockdown.

The Department of State suspended embassy services



Source: Quenton Lowery

worldwide due to travel and sanitary restrictions in March 2020, creating backlogs and extended waiting times for those applying for visas, especially international students.

"Starting Summer and Fall 2020 and Spring 2021, there were a few transfers, but [there were] pretty much no additional [international] students," Lowery said. Dallas College F-1 students currently account for approximately 3% of the student population.

According to the National Association of Foreign Student Advisers' economic analysis for the 2021-2022 academic year, international students contributed \$33.8 billion to the U.S. economy, in addition to creating

335,423 jobs in the academic year.

Lowery said international and F-1 students are important for the enrichment of Dallas College programs and culture, adding different perspectives and interests. Lowery said regardless of being pressured to fulfill certain requirements, F-1 students excel in their chosen programs.

Sofia Reyes, a Dallas College international student, said Dallas College has provided her with resources to navigate the enrollment process and make connections on campus. Reyes said she appreciates Dallas College providing international students with a Designated School Official, or DSO, that assists F-1 students

• **Enrollment**, *Page 7*

## College students face housing insecurity

By **Leonardo Rosas**  
Contributing Writer

Dallas College students who are evicted are more likely to drop out and not return than students who are not evicted, according to a 2022 study by Dallas-based nonprofit Child Poverty Action Lab, or CPAL, and the

Labor Market Intelligence Center at Dallas College.

Housing insecurity is a problem for many community college students. According to a 2020 survey by the Hope Center for College, Community, and Justice, 52% of students at two-year colleges reported some form of housing insecurity.

CPAL's study found that market rent prices are too steep for a typical college student's income. Dallas College students would need to earn at least \$60,000 annually to afford market-asking rent prices as of the second quarter of 2022. The median annual income for Dallas College students is \$28,000.

Camille Gilchrist, Director of GIS and Data Visualization at Dallas College, said Dallas College students who are evicted not only fail to complete their credentials but also lose money they have invested, as well as the potential to earn a higher wage.

• **Evictions**, *Page 7*

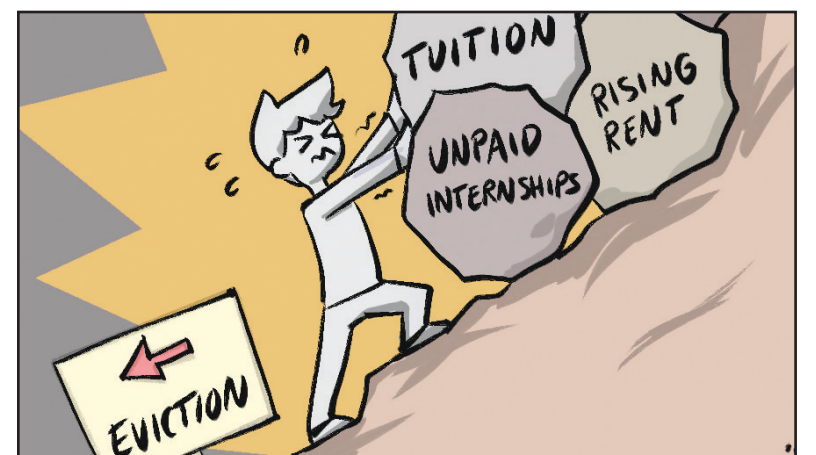
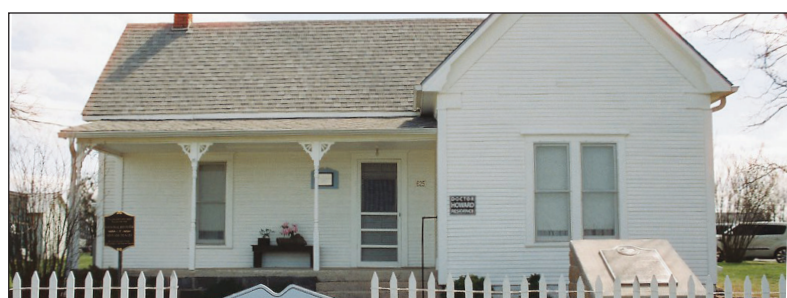


Illustration by Maria Elena Franco



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**Holocaust Collection**  
Library holds more than 500 books about the Holocaust, *Page 3*

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New form introduced, *Page 6*

**Brightspace**  
Blackboard dropped for Brightspace, *Page 7*

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# NEWS

## Fentanyl

Continued from page 1

said. “Two milligrams is a fatal dose. That is why it’s so dangerous.”

In laboratory analysis done by the DEA of seized fentanyl pills, Chávez said six out of 10 pills have an average of 2.34 grams of fentanyl – enough to cause an overdose.

He said other substances commonly consumed by teenagers can be laced with fentanyl. For example, vitamin pills or gummy bears could have a small amount of contamination from the illicit drug.

According to a U.S. Attorney’s Office, Northern District of Texas

press release, published on March 3, fentanyl was distributed in the Carrollton area on social media by Donovan Jude Andrews. Also linked to the 10 overdose cases are Luis Eduardo Navarrete, Jason Xavier Villanueva and Magaly Mejia Cano, who were charged with federal drug crime for distributing pills to high school students in the district.

Nabil Khawla, a high school biology professor at Carrollton-Farmers Branch ISD Early College High School on Brookhaven Campus, said he is concerned for his students. Khawla said he is worried about whether he would identify a student’s fatigue as regular exhaustion or symptoms of fentanyl consumption. According to the DEA,

a fentanyl overdose escalates from dizziness, nausea and vomiting to having a presence of symptoms including coma, pinpoint pupils and respiratory depression.

Ivett Bocanegra, parent and community engagement assistant at Carrollton-Farmers Branch ISD Early College High School, said the school district is doing everything in their power to inform parents about the dangers of fentanyl and to protect students. She said teachers and staff are trained to respond to an overdose episode.

“We have received training from the district to detect if a student is under any influence,” Bocanegra said. “If [students] are in a situation like that we have to administer Narcan.”

Narcan is an opioid overdose treatment that blocks the effects of the opioid, and is administered immediately during an emergency, according to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention website.

On March 3, Narcan was administered to an R.L. Turner High School student after she was found unconscious in a restroom, from a potential overdose, according to NBC5.

Chávez urged parents to have a conversation about fentanyl with their children. With an alarming number of cases surging in North Texas, he said it’s important to be aware of the community and report any threats to local authorities through anonymous tip lines.



Photo by Andrea Olan

**Eduardo A. Chavez tells parents to alert local authorities on unusual activities in their communities through anonymous tip lines on March 4.**



Illustration by Maria Elena Franco

## District to change eCampus host

By **Emmy Hardy**  
Copy Desk Chief

Dallas College is officially dropping Blackboard, the current Learning Management System (LMS), and host to the eCampus site. Blackboard has been used by Dallas College for two decades.

The new host to eCampus will be Brightspace. Brightspace is an LMS site powered by D2L, an online learning platform company based in Canada that has partnered with Dallas College for the transition.

The change will be a gradual one. Faculty began mandatory training last year in order to familiarize themselves with the new system. The transition will fully come into effect by the fall semester of 2023.

“The primary reason behind the change was ensuring that our learners, our students, had a more robust and intuitive system,” Pamela Luckett, chief engagement officer at Brookhaven Campus, said. “With the advent of the pandemic, and everybody really being forced to utilize [Blackboard], we really began to see some deficiencies.”

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, with more Dallas College students than ever taking online courses, various issues with Blackboard have been reported, such as lag time, hard to navigate systems and a non-mobile friendly user interface. According

to Luckett, the college seeks to address these issues with the transition to Brightspace. “We really wanted something that was much more student centric. So we put together a team,” Luckett said.

The team consists of a joint group of staff and faculty representing Academic Affairs, Operations, Student Services and Workforce Development. “I wanted to make sure we had a holistic team,” Luckett said. “This has been a joint effort.”

The transition is also being led by Terry Di Paolo, vice provost of e-Learning, a part of the Academic Affairs division. Di Paolo oversees online learning and works to deliver a better learning system for students and faculty. Operations and Academic Affairs have been the main force behind the effort, with subdivisions of both focusing on more specific aspects of the transition.

Di Paolo said the process involves people and organizations from across the Dallas College system, including Faculty Council leaders, the Online Learning User Group, which is made up of faculty and administrators, the Center for

Excellence in Teaching and Learning – a part of Academic Services – and the LMS Admin Team, which covers the technological aspect of the transition. Additionally, a core team of 15 faculty members and administrators have been handling academic implementation.

“Historically, eCampus has been a tool managed by technology in cooperation with academics,” Di Paolo said. “That all changed with the pandemic.”

When the COVID-19 pandemic began, more employees were forced to use eCampus in order to provide their services virtually. Major deficiencies in Blackboard were identified at this time.

Brightspace will include new methods of submitting assignments, including audio and video recording. In addition, Brightspace will introduce a slew of improved accessibility features, such as closed captioning and all video content and specific language settings. “We have to look at tools to make sure that it is going to be a suitable system for all of our students,” Luckett said.

Luckett said the team behind the transition is also dedicated to easing students into the new system.

Students will be able to access a training module for Brightspace in April, planned to be available as soon as a student logs on to the program for the first time. According to Luckett, this preemptive measure will hopefully prevent too much confusion before the semester begins.

Instructors will also be affected by the change, with many new organization options for their courses, including more dashboards and analytics, and an automatic message sending system for students who have not turned in assignments. The goal, Luckett said, is ultimately a more streamlined system in which students may easily locate all the resources they need. “The general response from staff has been very positive,” Luckett said.

The transition to Brightspace is the next step in a wider streamlining effort by Dallas College, with overhauls to the Learning Commons, Student Services and employee accounts also taking place. “It’s a step in the right direction,” Luckett said. “The tool is intuitive. The tool is user friendly. And I think it charts a pathway for the students.”

Di Paolo held similar sentiments about the switch. “The transition to Brightspace signals a new way of thinking about our eCampus system,” Di Paolo said. “It’s not just about classes; it’s about the online experience we provide our students and community.”

**“It’s not just about classes; it’s about the online experience we provide our students and community.”**

– Terry Di Paolo,  
Vice Provost of e-Learning

## Evictions

Continued from page 1

had they been able to continue their education.

“When you add that up for all of the students it affects, its millions and millions of dollars over the course of people’s careers because of one eviction filing they received while they were a student. So it has a really serious impact on students in the long term, and in the short term,” Gilchrist said.

According to the CPAL study, Dallas College students who were evicted and did not return to school lost about \$63 million in career earnings,

while the sum of rent owed by these students was just \$490,000. Only 4% of students who were evicted were able to complete their education.

“We definitely have a lot of students who are either at risk of facing or have been through an eviction,” Stephanie Harris, associate dean of basic needs and community connections at Dallas College, said.

Dallas College provides assistance for students facing eviction. Dwayne

Jones, senior care coordinator at Dallas College, is students’ go-to point of contact. His office is in Room A224.

Dallas College students are encouraged to seek assistance and be proactive. “Ideally, prevention is the easiest response,” Harris said. “If we know that a student isn’t going to be able to pay their rent, then they can reach out

to our department for some assistance.”

Assistance for students comes in

many forms – from financial literacy to connecting with the Career Services Department, emergency aid and cutting back food expenses each month by using the food pantries at Dallas College campuses, Harris said.

Dallas College students can also fill out a student care form with the Basic Needs and Community Connections department on the Dallas College website, and a coordinator with the department will reach out.

Ashley Flores, senior director at CPAL, said, “Having stable housing is really a prerequisite for being able to be successful and complete your credentials. So having any support that can get to students to keep them housed is really important.”

**“Having stable housing is really a prerequisite for being able to be successful and complete your credentials.”**

– Ashley Flores,  
CPAL Senior Director

## ECHS

Continued from page 1

students currently in the P and U buildings on campus as well as high school students from Dallas Independent School District.

Original plans set the center to be completed by April 2023 and ready to occupy by August 2023.

Timothy Isaly, Early College High School principal, said, “We heard in October and November there was a delay in the supply chain of raw materials that were being shipped to start the building or to work on the building. And then we were told that [ECC] would probably be delayed until January of 2024.”

These delayed plans have affected ECHS enrollment. “I have had to back off from telling people we will be in there in August,” Isaly said. “And I had to limit the number of freshmen we were gonna take because I cannot put too many freshmen in a tiny P Building.”

The Early College Center will have a capacity of at least 400 students with 26 classrooms including labs and office space, Isaly said.

Glenn Partners, the architects and management team of the new ECC building, said on their website, “The ECC [is designed] to act as a pathway to college by integrating and strengthening existing pedestrian pathways with the new ECC building. The ECC also serves as a haven for students visiting campus from multiple home districts.”

P Building, where ECHS students are currently located, will be demolished once students have moved into the ECC.

A new entrance from Alpha Road on the northeast side of the campus is expected to be ready when the ECC building is completed. With the construction of the ECC, tennis courts on campus were demolished. Isaly said, after briefly reviewing the

construction blueprints, he found no plans to replace the tennis courts on campus.

The Early College Center is a huge milestone and an excellent opportunity to offer more high school students the chance to graduate with college credits and possibly their associate’s degree. Current ECHS students have varying opinions on how the new mini-campus will affect the sense of community within the ECHS program. Dayanara Torres, a first-year ECHS student, said, “I think these [new] buildings are a good opportunity for creating bonds with Dallas ISD and being more connected as a community.”

Susana Perez, a current senior ECHS student who will not get to experience the new building as a student, said: “A con is that I feel like as the school is expanding, there are going to be more students, and I like how the school is right now. It is more of a close bond with everyone in other grade [levels] compared to other high schools. I feel like we are friends with people from different grades, and it is because it is such a small school.”

However, students are excited for new additions that are not present in P and U buildings. Perez said, “The pro, I would say, is that we are finally going to have a cafeteria.”

Torres said, “I believe that the new buildings could provide upgrades in safety and efficiency within our school that our current [P and U] buildings may not offer.”

The Early College Center has been nearly a decade in the making. Perez said, “They have been trying to do this for 10 years, and it has been much work for Isaly to get the green lights.”

Isaly said, “We will try and have some kind of special grand opening event whenever we get in there [and] invite all the alums and anybody who ever was an Early College High School student. They need to see the building.”



Illustration by Maria Elena Franco

## Enrollment

Continued from page 1

with any questions or concerns they might have.

Dallas College Designated School Officials guide students from the initial application to graduation and work authorizations. They work closely with F-1 students to comply with their visa requirements to maintain their status.

Reyes said she navigates through the culture shock and adapts to the American culture and college experience with ease. She said the Multicultural Affairs department has provided resources to promote different

cultures and nationalities on campus. “Their events make me feel seen, appreciated and respected,” Reyes said.

Sean Guinyard, a multicultural affairs coordinator at Brookhaven Campus, said international students play a big role in culture at Dallas College, and the Multicultural Affairs office is open for students looking for resources. Multicultural Affairs also hosts events to celebrate diversity, culture and bring awareness to domestic students about international students.

“We [recently] had International Education Week,” Guinyard said. “It was an opportunity for us to host events geared toward international students, like International Tea and Coffee.”



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## FEATURE

# BHC astronomer talks life's journey

By Kamila Vargas-Gonzalez  
Contributing Writer

Usually spotted wearing a vibrant, tropical patterned short sleeve button-up shirt and foam padded sneakers, Chaz Hafey, astronomer, geologist and lab specialist at Dallas College Brookhaven Campus visits up to six classes almost every day in K Building.

Like the star clusters Hafey observes in the sky, he is part of a cluster of organizations and activities outside of Dallas College. All are related to astronomy. "Sleep would be good," Hafey said

as he got comfortable in one of the many chairs in Room K251. "There are things constantly going on in the sky."

Hafey has dedicated his career to his passion for astronomy. From a young age, his eyes have stayed glued to the sky in search of astronomical wonders.

### 1960'S SKY EFFECTS

In 1966, a young Hafey stepped out from his home and joined his father on the concrete driveway. With their chins pointed to the sky, father and son admired the glowing streaks running through the atmosphere: a meteor shower. The bright

rays reflected in both of their eyes.

Since then, Hafey has remained enchanted by the lights in the sky. He received a Bachelor of Science in astronomy at The Ohio State University. "Emphasize the 'The,'" Hafey said, chuckling as he remembered his Alma mater's attempt at trademarking the word "The."

Soon after entering college, Hafey went through a difficult chapter in his life.

**"I was given the option of naming an asteroid, and I named one Brookhaven."**

— Chaz Hafey,  
Brookhaven Campus  
Physical Sciences Lab  
Specialist

Hafey said he decided to move out of his parent's home because he was driving between work, school and home. He moved in with a friend in an apartment close to his college campus.

Two weeks before he moved out, his parents separated. In the same year, his grandparents, dog and cat died. Hafey was 20 years old, and either withdrew from or failed every class he took that year.

"Obviously, I survived," Hafey said, smiling and gesturing toward Room K251, where labs take place for Brookhaven students. "Maybe I had to go through that so I could look at a student in their face and say, 'I know, I've had challenges too.'"

### WONDROUS STUDENTS

If the sky is clear and there is little to no wind, stargazing observing



Photo by Trennt Rhea

Chaz Hafey, physical sciences lab specialist, looks through a transparent celestial sphere.

sessions for the astronomy students are a go. Hafey said he finds students' reactions to looking through telescopes more memorable than anything he has seen through a telescope himself.

"When they first see the moon through a telescope, they say, 'I can see craters.'" Hafey said with wide eyes and a tight smile. "You can do that with binoculars."

Saturn especially fascinates Hafey's students. Through the telescope, Saturn's rings reflect in the students' eyes, and their smiles reflect in Hafey's.

Students at Brookhaven who take astronomy courses are familiar with

Hafey. Julia Wagner, a dual credit student, said, "He's enjoyable to work with and helpful in a lab scenario."

Hafey said, "I want to infect people with a love for astronomy."

Sitting at one of the black science lab tables, Hafey stares with his chin pointing slightly up at the three award plaques on the wall of Room K251, two from NASA and one from Pan-STARRS. "I was given the option of naming an asteroid, and I named one Brookhaven," he said.

### FOR FUN

Flashing back a couple of decades, Hafey participated in the

Messier Marathon in an observatory north of Columbus, Ohio. His team saw 108 out of the 110 of Charles Messier's list of objects, such as galaxies, nebulae, star clusters and birth and death places of stars. "[It was] back in the late '70s or early '80s," he said.

In 2017, Hafey planned a trip to see a total solar eclipse. He said, "A friend of mine and I went up to Roberts, Idaho, and we were able to see where the moon completely blacked out the sun for two minutes, and then we could see stars in the sky in the middle of the day."

While Hafey spends a lot of time traveling across the country, he is also part of the Dallas Community Emergency Response Team, or CERT, where he obtained his amateur radio license. "I became a member of CERT in Dallas through a whole week-long training session," Hafey said.

As an amateur radio operator, learning disaster response skills for emergencies such as severe weather storms is critical. Preparation and practice is key. Practice for Hafey includes Turkey Trots, the Plano Balloon Festival and bicycle races. During these events, amateur radio operators radio each other, checking whether the event is going smoothly.

"When I first got my amateur radio license, the Dallas Amateur Radio Club was meeting in a church across the street because it was a free room," Hafey said. "I went to their December meeting, and I applied for membership. The president of the club at the time, Tom General, was reading off all the stuff to the whole group, and they said, 'Astronomy? You do astronomy? I need to talk to you afterward.'"

Hafey was talked into being part of a broadcast on astronomy, which can be viewed on YouTube. The channel is DARC Skynet - Astronomy Net. He said: "We broadcast not only over amateur radio, but we do it over the internet on YouTube. It's every Saturday night from 9 p.m. until 10:30 p.m. I think we're in our 13th year of doing this."

# Alumnus recalls unforgettable graduation walk

By Andrea Olan  
Managing Editor

Samuel Salmeron expected a normal walk across the stage on May 11, 2017, his graduation day. After eight years, and many challenges along the way, it was time to receive his well-earned degree.

With excitement and eagerness, he approached the main stage, name card in hand, reflecting on the years of college education that were behind him. Salmeron had been working at Dallas College around nine years at that point, but he never expected to be the standout of his graduation ceremony.

### AN UNFORGETTABLE WALK

On May 11, 2017, graduates moved like a well-oiled machine. Students walked up to the presenter, turned in their name cards and walked across the stage with their diploma in hand without interruption. It was Salmeron's turn, and as he handed his name card, the well-oiled machine of students took a pause.

As his name was called, former Brookhaven College president Thom D. Chesney urged professors and staff on stage to shake Samuel's hand and personally congratulate him in front of all attendees. Confusion and shock were the only thoughts going through Salmeron's head, while his family, with gasps and excitement, cheered from the audience.

He shook hands with everybody on stage, and made his way down. With excitement, Salmeron had only one phrase on his mind: "I did it."

### FINDING DIRECTION

Growing up in a military family and constantly moving from state to state, Salmeron's high school years were spent in Honolulu, Hawaii.

He attempted to start his college career after graduating high school in 1989. Salmeron never considered himself the studious type, and left his college education undone. "I dropped out," Salmeron said. "I was failing every class, and I had no option really."

His parents wanted him to have a sense of direction, and originally set him to enlist in the military.

He refused and moved to Texas. With a construction job lined up, he hoped to find his direction.

Salmeron eventually found his way into Brookhaven Campus as a heating, ventilation, air conditioning and refrigeration technician.

Salmeron wanted to take advantage of the tuition discount for full-time employees. He was informed of this benefit through his sister-in-law, Mai Salmeron. She said getting him started was the most difficult task. It took locating old transcripts and taking placement exams for Samuel to gain momentum and begin his academic journey once again.

Three of Samuel's siblings were Brookhaven alumni, who transitioned to four-year universities. Samuel felt the pressure to enroll after high school. He took their example as motivation, and became the last sibling to enroll in college, determined to finish.

### SLOW BUT STEADY

In 2008, Samuel enrolled in his first college class after taking a break from his studies since 1989. He said by taking one or two classes a semester, he balanced work and school.

The biggest challenge Samuel faced when taking his classes was technology. He said there was a leap between going to college in the '90s and today. "When I originally went to college, everything was on typewriter. Technology totally changed," Samuel said.

There was a point every semester where Samuel wanted to throw in the towel. He said he regularly visited his advisers to drop classes, but they never allowed him to quit.

Mai said her brother-in-law felt frustrated and tired of taking classes. She reminded him of how close he was to getting his degree, and to lighten up his coursework through interesting elective classes.

Having a support system was important for Samuel. His family, professors, classmates and coworkers wanted to see him succeed. "I had the right people around me to push me, guide me, and help me finish," Samuel said.

Eventually, it became easier for Samuel to find motivation. There was a community of people who wanted to see him finish his degree. "I believe that his trust in me made it easier for him to reach out when he needed help or guidance," Mai said, "that allowed him to continue with his education and not be discouraged."

He said he does not regret any minute of it. Having the opportunity to go to college for free and walk across the stage was the greatest satisfaction.

Mai said, "That moment solidified for me that [the] Dallas College family does support and care for their students and employees, and want[s] them to succeed."

Samuel said he encourages students from all walks of life to keep going. "If you are in a two-year college, and it takes you four, five, six years, it does not matter," he said. "What matters is that you finish. All of this was worth it."

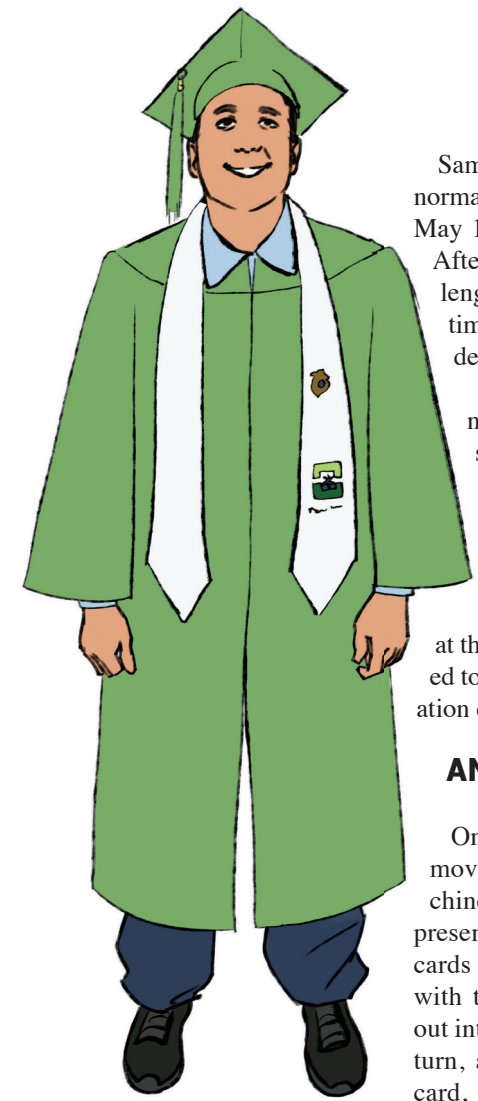
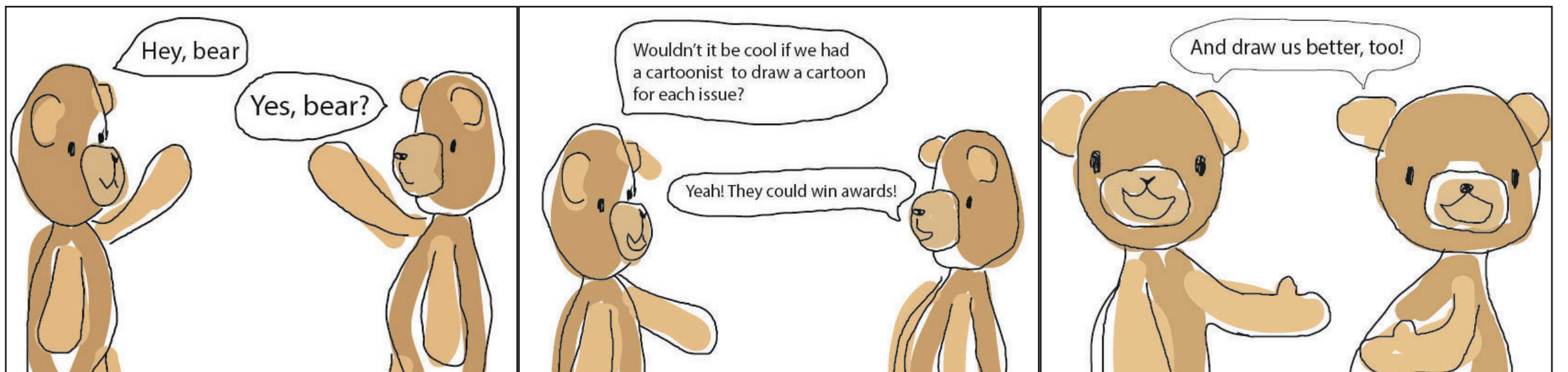


Illustration by Maria Elena Franco

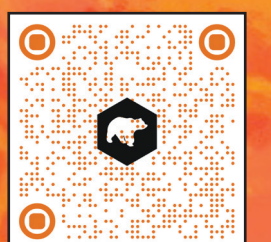


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## OPINION

# Theocracy threatens women in Iran

As protests surrounding the death of Mahsa Amini continue to take place in Iran, Iranian lawmakers have recently called for stricter punishments for the protesters who have been arrested.



Andrea Olan

According to CNN, in a letter signed Nov. 8, 227 members of the Iranian parliament urged protesters to be given harsh punishment to “serve as a good lesson in the shortest possible time.”

While in police custody in Tehran on Sept. 16 Amini was detained due to allegedly violating Iran’s strict veiling laws, which forbid women from going out in public without wearing their hijab and punish the misuse of the headscarf, according to CNN. Amini, a 22-year-old Iranian native became the martyr for protesters.

According to Amini’s brother, Kiarash, his sister was detained by the Guidance Patrol, which acts as “morality police” and enforces Islamic dress codes upon female citizens. Kiarash said his sister was forcibly taken into a police van according to Iranian news outlet, Iran Wire.

Officers proceeded to take Amini to a local police station to receive “re-education classes.”

Incidents such as Amini’s death continue in countries around the world, with more cases of discrimination, violence or death involving women.

According to Amnesty International, it’s common practice for Iranian law enforcement groups to proceed with arbitrary arrests and the use of force toward their citizens. However, the Iranian authorities denied their involvement in Amini’s death and said her death was brought on by a heart attack.

The morality police exerts its power to harass, terrorize and discriminate against Iranian citizens.

“Women, life, freedom.” These are the words that protesters chant as they demand their right to freedom in Iran and around the world. Iranian women have been oppressed through silence and violence, not by hiding under their headscarves.

As a sign of protest, Iranian women are cutting their hair and burning their hijabs publicly, while men take to the streets with their relatives in solidarity. Protesters post their videos on platforms such as Instagram and WhatsApp, which have been restricted by the Iranian government. People gathered at Amini’s funeral on Sept. 29 to mourn and

protest. Iranians want discrimination and violence toward women to end and for the government and authorities to be held accountable.

Sheri Van Court, an ESOL professor at Brookhaven Campus, originally from Iran, said that Iran is one of the few Middle Eastern countries where women have been more liberal and independent. “Women in Iran do have a lot of rights,” Van Court said. “The majority of them are doctors, engineers, highly educated, and they can be what they want to be.”

Theocracy in Iran has led to strict rulings. Religions and their scriptures have different interpretations, and this time it seems the Iranian government has

escalated to another level. Van Court said, in the Quran, Islam does not oblige women to wear hijabs or headscarves, instead, it suggests modest clothing when in public.

Many wear them by choice, while others express their individuality through their hair and clothing. “They are putting most of the effort on subduing women, because they want to save their image that they are a theocracy,” Van Court said. “It’s the Islamic Republic of Iran, therefore,



Photo by Brandon Donner

Protesters march in solidarity with Iranian women on Oct. 29 in Washington, D.C.

women have to cover themselves.”

A government’s focus should not be on religion. Matters such as education, healthcare and security should be its primary focus. What the Iranian regime is doing is subduing its citizens into a government’s interpretation of Islam, and not allowing Iranians to live a free life. Relentlessly, protesters are taking to the streets against the government of the Iranian president, Ebrahim Raisi.

Theocratic governments are a threat to freedom and security for women, bullying them into silence and even death. During a critical time for Iran, President Raisi refused to speak to

Christiane Amanpour, a CNN reporter, when she declined to wear the hijab for the interview. This only emphasizes the lack of responsiveness of Iranian authorities on the death of Amini.

The Iranian government, which has taken extreme measures against their people, used violence during protests, accounting for 233 deaths, most victims being women and children, according to the Human Rights Activists News Agency. “The government is worried that they’re losing their control [over] women,” Van Court said.

Iran has had similar protests during the 20th and 21st centuries, although they have not seen

them to this magnitude. With protests surging across the world, everyone should be concerned, because cases such as Amini’s affect everyone.

The future of women is uncertain. As more protests are taking place in Iran and around the world, safety has been the primary concern.

It is an alarming time to be a woman, as more government regimes, such as the Iranian government, seem to abide by oppressing and discriminating laws. It is more than demanding the use of a headscarf, it is the violence and oppression imposed by the theocratic authorities that will only end with women’s freedom.

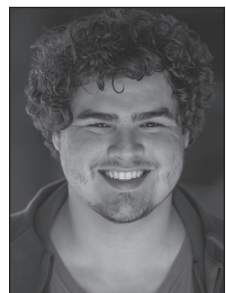
## Online proctoring is terrible for education



Illustration by Maria Elena Franco

Online proctoring is entirely invasive. Companies such as Honorlock and Proctorio need specific information such as what your room

looks like or all the information from a government-issued ID when a school ID should do this trick. This is a complete violation of privacy.



Trennt Rhea

Proctoring services in which users have to download something that scans their computer should be illegal. After trying to download the proctoring software Honorlock, the antivirus program I had on my computer would not let me download. The antivirus program warned me that Honorlock could potentially scan documents on my computer. I was only able to download Honorlock after disabling the antivirus program.

I have autofill information on my computer that contains my mobile device and financial information. It is truly terrifying to think Honorlock might have scanned my autofill information after removing the antivirus program.

I understand online proctoring is meant to prevent cheating and plagiarism. These are issues

facing college campuses and schools across the U.S. especially due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which forced many classes to go online.

Having a locked down browser so you are not allowed to leave a quiz or exam screen is fine, but when my computer, my room and my personal ID, which has my home address are getting scanned, I get suspicious and mistrustful.

As a college student, when this software is required for taking important exams, I am left feeling doubtful about certain schools and universities and how they treat students.

The ability to track movements is a big problem. This is particularly hard for students with ADHD. This is not ideal when you are taking a longer test, such as a midterm or a final exam, and you have to take tests lasting upwards of 120 minutes. These proctoring services want you to look at your screen for that long without moving your head or body.

Schools and universities are allowing companies to track your movements while also tracking your data. This is a complete invasion of privacy, and schools that use these services allow it to happen.

According to The Washington Post, Aaron Ogletree, a Cleveland State University student, alleged the university violated the Fourth Amendment when he was trying to take a test and he was asked to

allow remote proctoring to scan his surroundings in search of “potential impermissible study aids or notes.”

When the request came up before his test, Ogletree had confidential tax information in view and there was no time to shield his information. The scan was recorded, a copy was kept by the proctoring company and the scan was also available to his fellow students. Ogletree argued this violated his Fourth Amendment right to be free of unreasonable search and seizure.

The Ohio federal judge presiding over his case agreed. Judge J. Philip Calabrese said: “The ubiquity of a particular technology or its applications does not directly bear on that analysis.”

In the court’s view, the very core of the Fourth Amendment is the right to be free of governmental intrusion in the home; the proctoring scan occurred in the Plaintiff’s house, in his bedroom.”

Ogletree’s case is an example of what students go through. There is no consideration for students, no thought process for what students might be going through and no sense of urgency for changing these proctoring services and coming up with different viable solutions.

This issue is not going to stop. According to The Washington Post, “The global market for examination proctoring software is

expected to reach \$1.5 billion by 2028.” These businesses want you to believe they somehow “protect academic integrity.”

Make no mistake: The companies offering online proctoring services are doing it for profit. They have no thoughts or feelings about students, even if they are cheating. Their thoughts are on the money.

Students across Texas are taking notice of what these proctoring services are doing. The University of Texas at Dallas has a petition to remove Honorlock with over 7,000 signatures. Texas A&M has a similar petition with almost 10,000 signatures. Texas Tech University has a petition to ban Proctorio with over 2,000 signatures. Petitions can only do so much, but it shows that students across Texas are seeing what these services are doing and want to put a stop to harmful online proctoring.

It is truly egregious that online proctoring is still allowed at certain schools and universities. Schools should protect students from things such as this, not allow it to happen. A federal judge ruled that online proctoring is unconstitutional. That should be enough to ban all online proctoring.

The very idea of a service looking at my personal information and my own home is truly terrifying as a college student. It is dystopian, and should never be allowed on any type of campus.



### THE BROOKHAVEN COURIER

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# ARTS & CULTURE

## Bits & Bites gives taste of Dallas

By Andrea Olan  
Managing Editor

From chardonnays to Texas barbecue bánh mì and upside down cheesecake, over 700 attendees were welcomed to an evening of delicate bits and appetizing bites at the annual Dallas College fundraising event, hosted by the college's Culinary, Pastry and Hospitality program.

Bits & Bites was held April 16 at the Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Garden's A Tasteful Place. Guests enjoyed a scenic view of White Rock Lake with the Dallas skyline in the distance while tasting various dishes offered by Dallas chefs. Singer Sierra Leone delighted attendees with live jazz music.

Dallas College Chancellor Justin Lonon said he hopes attendees got a sense of what Dallas College stands for and their focus on contributing to the community. "We get to showcase our students, our culinary program, our partners and restaurants from Dallas," he said. "We want to ensure [Dallas College] students have the opportunity to go into the workforce and get great jobs."

This year's event was in honor of Jim White, radio show host and co-founder of Savor Dallas Food and Wine Festival, who died June 4, 2022. His contributions to the Dallas culinary scene are widely known, especially by those who tuned in to his radio show for local food recommendations and unique dining experiences. He was known for "The KRLD Restaurant Show," and created the Celebrity Chef Kitchen at the State Fair of Texas.

His wife, Vicki Briley-White,



Clockwise from left: Dallas College student Christopher Ourfalian applies sesame seeds to a single yakisoba noodle salad with Asian dressing and smoked duck breast on top; The flavorful combination of yakisoba noodle salad waits to be savored; Mesquite High School student Alexa Estevez performs a skillet toss while she cooks roasted corn with queso fresco and cilantro; Rosewood waygu beef short rib over corn and pico de gallo served with tortilla chips from Beckley 1115 is plated for guests to eat.



Photos by Trennt Rhea

was the honorary guest of the evening. She welcomed guests and greeted familiar faces. She invited them to participate in a silent auction to endow a scholarship in their name, the Jim White and Vicki Briley-White Scholarship.

Briley-White said the scholarship will assist Dallas College students committed to the culinary and hospitality industry. "I started this scholarship in my husband's honor," she said. "Part of it will be invested so they can give it every year and keep growing."

Steve DeShazo, senior director of Workforce and Career Connected Learning at Dallas College,

said White and Briley-White have contributed to his culinary career. "Every time Vicki and Jim could think of an opportunity to involve students, they called me," he said. "Without their vision, none of these chef festivals would be as prevalent as they are today."

During the event, attendees had the opportunity to donate through QR codes to support the college's Culinary, Pastry and Hospitality program.

Around 30 local chefs, including Dallas College alumni and current students, contributed to the culinary event and served 18,000 plates of food. It was an

opportunity for culinary and hospitality students to get a glimpse of the Dallas service industry and create important connections for their careers.

Christopher Ourfalian, a culinary student, said it was his first time participating in Bits & Bites. "We are moving at a pretty quick speed," he said. "We are having fun. Food is good and networking has been enjoyable." Before the event concluded, students visited other booths for a taste of other dishes.

Preston Nguyen, a Dallas College alumnus, 2022 World Food Champion and "Next Level Chef"

competitor, said his dish was inspired by flavors familiar to his childhood, while adding a Texan fusion to a classical Vietnamese dish – a Texas barbecue bánh mì sandwich. The delicately plated toasted baguette, with smoked pulled pork, pickled root vegetables, Asian aioli and soy sauce pearls on top, was popular with attendees.

"Growing up in Texas, I obviously love barbecue, and my dad is Vietnamese, so I wanted to infuse the two together and try something new," Nguyen said.

Chef Segundo Romero Victorica, a Dallas College culinary

instructor, said his team of students worked on developing their dish for two weeks. "We had been thinking about how we want to present it and also checking the weather. We decided to make something cold," Victorica said.

They presented a fresh gazpacho with olive oil, apple cider vinegar, celery, beer, a touch of serrano peppers and dill with lemongrass shrimp.

Victorica said he loves Bits & Bites because it is not very formal. "We have people from everywhere and any age from kids to old people," he said. "It is a family event in a beautiful atmosphere."

## Three classic 24-hour diners to visit in D-FW

By Trennt Rhea  
Photo Editor

Plates clattering, bacon sizzling and people conversing are the exact sounds produced from a unique American experience: the

24-hour diner.

From the neon lights and vinyl booths of classic diners to the modern decor of contemporary restaurants, 24-hour diners have evolved since they first started. Despite COVID-19 and many societal

challenges of the past few years, 24-hour diners remain a beloved American establishment.

For decades, 24-hour diners have been a staple in American culture. They offer a place for people who stay up all night, early risers in the

morning to come grab a plate or for students who need to stay late to study. For some customers, the 24-hour diner is more than just a place to grab a late-night meal. It is a social hub, a gathering place for friends and family to catch up over

coffee, pancakes, waffles, bacon and eggs.

There are many 24-hour options to choose from in Dallas. You can always go to Whataburger or any late night fast food restaurant. You can even go and get snacks from

QuickTrip. All of these places are convenient but lack the one thing that makes 24-hour diners great: a social connection. Fortunately, residents in D-FW have three great options that offer the classic 24-hour dining experience.



With red chairs and green plastic booth seats, the seating section of J's Breakfast & Burgers awaits customers.

### J'S BREAKFAST & BURGERS

14925 Midway Road #105  
Addison, TX 75001

J's Breakfast & Burgers gives you a more straightforward 24-hour dining experience. This independent diner has been serving breakfast and burgers since they first opened in 1982. They now have 25 employees working three different shifts.

With cream colored walls, red chairs and green booth seats, J's makes you feel as if you traveled back to when American diners were making their way toward landmark status. They even allow smoking. This is a no-nonsense diner that gives you a sense of familiarity with affordable prices. Like their name suggests, the menu is breakfast and burgers.

Samantha Lynn Beckner, a midday shift waitress, said she believes J's is a perfect example of what a 24-hour diner should be. "We are the greasy spoon," she said. "We want to give our customers lots of food and lots of happiness. We are here to feed them so they are happy."

Beckner said she loves the uniqueness of J's and how it is different from chains and franchises. "We are a small business, not a franchise," Beckner said. "If you don't act right, we'll yell at you. We have generations of faithful customers, and we allow smoking."



Plates with the hobo combo which include a side of scrambled eggs, bacon strips, sausage links, hash browns and a stack of pancakes.

### METRO DINER

2316 W Davis Street  
Dallas, TX 75208

Metro Diner began as a chain in Jacksonville, Florida, in 1938 and is now a Dallas staple. The Diner did not receive the same level of success as Waffle House as a chain, but this does not diminish the many qualities it has.

Metro Diner features a more retro look with black and white square patterns on the exterior of the building, red and black booth seats and plastic red and white menus.

The food also sets Metro Diner apart, with classic bacon, eggs, pancakes, hash browns, fried chicken and waffles their extensive menu.

During the midday shift, chef Jimmie Jewel Joneson stays busy with orders from customers. "People eat with their eyes," Joneson said.

"If you slap that food on that plate, they might not eat it," Joneson said. "But if you take the time to cook it like you're supposed to, they'll sit there and eat everything on the plate... I try to put enough on everybodys plate so they'll be full."

Metro Diner gives the distinct ambience of what a 24-hour diner should be and epitomizes a piece of American culture.



Film photos by Trennt Rhea

Waffle House salesperson Matthew Brown (left) grabs a tray while grill master and salesperson Thomas Krueger pours coffee.

### WAFFLE HOUSE

14951 Marsh Lane  
Farmers Branch, TX 75234

Waffle House, the iconic Southern diner chain, has been a fixture on the culinary landscape for over 65 years. Known for its iconic yellow sign and being open 24/7, the chain has established itself as a cultural representation of the South.

Because of Waffle House's accessibility, people flock to it when everything else is closed. As soon as you walk in, Waffle House feels like home. The aroma, atmosphere and food remind you of a time when you had no troubles. You feel the same thing at 3 a.m. or at 6 p.m.

Going with friends or family exemplifies this feeling. It feels as though you are creating a memory.

Thomas Krueger, a salesperson and master grill operator, has been working at Waffle House for less than a year while still in high school. "One thing I like about this place, whether I work here or not, is the atmosphere," Krueger said. "I like the diner atmosphere where you actually have to sit down and enjoy a meal instead of getting your food in a paper bag and drive off."

He said, "I can get a cup of coffee and I can bring my laptop in and do some work at 9 a.m. in the morning or at 2 a.m. in the morning."





# OPINION

## Latino parents avoid the sex talk

When children reach puberty, their parents often approach them to discuss changes in their bodies and answer questions about sex. For many Latino teenagers, this is not the case. According to the National Library of Medicine, Hispanic parents hold back from having conversations about sexual and reproductive health. The sex talk is a cultural taboo.

According to Pew Research, only 39% of Latino parents discuss birth control in their households. Even with 53% of Latino youth reporting having discussed sex at some point, it is not enough to fulfill the need for more sexual education in our homes.

The few conversations I had with my parents where sex was implicitly discussed were mostly warnings to wait until marriage. My parents would only tell me “Take care of yourself” or “Don’t you dare do it.”

With that implicit warning combined with the constant exposure to sexuality on television, movies and music, I could only wonder what the mystery behind sex was, and why we should not talk about it.

I felt as if I was left alone in an educational journey that was overwhelming, especially during my pre-teen years.

According to Pew Research,

77% of Christian Latino parents correlate sex with being impure, sinful and negative.

Contraceptives, sexuality and consent were no-go topics in my inner circle. My curiosity grew, but the only place I could turn to was social media and the internet.

According to the National Center for Biotechnology Information, machismo culture is predominant within the Latino community, and there are disparities between how sex is viewed for men and women.

Erika Guevara-Rosas, Americas director at Amnesty International, said, “Comprehensive sexuality education is a fundamental tool for the defense of human rights ... from gender-based violence and inequality to problems related to sexual and reproductive health.”

Despite living in a conservative environment, male friends and classmates were vocal about their experiences. I had to sit in silence, trying to understand why it was easier for them and not for me.

Young people may look for sexual health information on platforms such as TikTok and YouTube.

Many sex educators are using these platforms to create a safe space for those looking for information. That is not enough to substitute real sex education at home or at school.

The Planned Parenthood website was the only reliable source I had to understand what options



Illustration by Maria Elena Franco

were available for me.

According to the Pan American Health Organization, 15% of pregnancies in Latin America occur in women under the age of

20. This is a clear reflection of the lack of sexual education in schools and homes, and something I was deeply afraid of.

After moving to the U.S., my exposure to sex ed amplified. After 19 years of living in Honduras, where the morning after pill is illegal and contraceptives are not available for women, being

able to access these resources was a breath of fresh air.

At this point, I still never had the sex talk with my parents. Even if we discuss politics, religion and sports, it seems like the line was drawn when I wanted to ask them about birth control.

Concepts such as consent, the use of contraceptives, preventing a pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases are not exempt when discussing reproductive health.

Due to my parents conservative upbringing, these important concepts were never spoken about.

As a daughter of young Latino parents, I understand why they never wanted to discuss my reproductive health and having sex, since they feared

I would eventually continue the generational cycle of having kids at a young age. Even the thought of their daughter beginning her sexual journey seemed unimaginable.

Sex is part of human nature, and as embarrassing as it might feel to have a conversation, it is imperative to protect ourselves from the overwhelming amount of information online.

Not having these conversations at home is harmful, not only for our generation, but for our parents as well.

The generational cycle continues and the stigma around sex is far from broken.

It is better to be safe than sorry, especially when it comes to our reproductive health.

## Ways to change your mindset

One’s thoughts can be very powerful. It is easy to believe you may not pass a class because it seems too hard, that someone may not like you because of how you dress or that people just annoy you in general.

Whether these thoughts are fleeting or run like a song on repeat, you can change them. You can start by using these simple tools.

Meditating can be an extremely helpful tool in recognizing negative thoughts and refocusing them to positive ones.

It also helps people relax and cope with stress.

According to the Mayo Clinic website, “Meditation can give you a sense of calm, peace and balance that can benefit both your emotional well-being and your overall health.”

If you own a cell phone and can remain undisturbed for 15 minutes, you have already achieved half the battle. There are hundreds of meditation apps you can use. These apps

will walk you through the process.

Try using affirmations. Positive affirmations are phrases, either spoken or thought, to affirm and build yourself up – especially amid difficult situations, according to the Cleveland Clinic website.

Affirmations combat negative phrases we may often use such as “I can’t,” “I’m not,” “I won’t” or “If only I.” Phrases such as these can keep you second guessing yourself and unfocused on the goal at hand. Instead, use phrases such as “I can,” “I will” and “I am.” Examples of how they are used are as follows: “I can be organized;” “I will pass this class;” “I am smart and beautiful;” “My skills will change the world.” Having these phrases in your arsenal can keep you fueled up, in a positive mindset and ready to take on the day.

Sometimes trying to change the way you think is not as easy as reading an article, trying an app or studying a self-help book.

Sometimes you need an expert such as Katie Neff, a licensed

counselor at Brookhaven Campus, or others in the Counseling and Psychological Services at Brookhaven Campus.

Counselors recognize you as a whole person, not just a student. Whether you are feeling overwhelmed, stressed out or just need emotional support, they are there to help.

Listening to music can be a tool to change your mindset. Especially when it has a positive message behind it.

According to Medical News Today, clinical therapists use the power of music to help their clients better their moods and regulate emotions. When researchers at the Centre for Interdisciplinary Music Research at the University of Jyväskylä, Aalto University in Finland and Aarhus University in Denmark investigated the relationship between mental health, music listening habits and neural responses to music emotions, their results were quite interesting.

Analysis showed anxiety and neuroticism were higher in participants with specific markers who tend to listen to sad or aggressive

music to express negative feelings, especially in males.

Take a look at your playlist and the lyrics from the music you enjoy. If it has a positive message, is calming, relaxing and keeps you in a good mood, you are on the right track. If not, I would encourage you to try out new music. Build a new playlist or podcast playlist of positivity.

Reading and listening to motivational speakers and self-help coaches can be helpful too. People such as Tony Robbins, Oprah Winfrey and Eric Thomas inspire, encourage and can be a wealth of information toward more positive thinking. A few great books that have been helpful for me are “No Matter What!” by Lisa Nichols, “How to win friends and influence people” by Dale Carnegie, “The Magic of Thinking BIG” by David J. Schwartz and “Atomic Habits” by James Clear.

No matter where you are in your life, changing your thoughts from negative to positive can help you live a more meaningful and positive life.



### THREE APPS WE RECOMMEND



**Calm**  
Helps people with relaxation, meditation and sleep.

**Headspace**  
Meditation made simple. It teaches you the basic skills of meditation and mindfulness in as little as a few minutes a day.

**Ten Percent Happier**  
Teachers and scientists who help guide you not only in the art of meditation but also sleeping better. One can become more mindful and happy.


### COUNSELING SERVICES

Brookhaven Campus

8 a.m. to 10 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Friday.

972-669-6400 or  
at [counseling@dallascollege.edu](mailto:counseling@dallascollege.edu)

Counseling and Psychological Services website  
[bit.ly/dc\\_counseling\\_appt](http://bit.ly/dc_counseling_appt)



## THE BROOKHAVEN COURIER

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