

ACP 2025 Individual Awards

Reporter of the Year – Two Year School

School: Dallas College – Brookhaven

Student: Shehzil Imran

Table of Contents

Pg.	Story Type	Headline	Published
2	News Story	<i>Colleges no longer labeled protected from ICE</i>	April 7, 2025
3	Feature Story	<i>Josey Records marks a decade of success</i>	Oct. 28, 2025
4	Additional Story: Column	<i>Taking the ‘free’ away from free press</i>	April 7, 2025
5	Additional Story: Arts & Culture	<i>Influential director David Lynch dead at 78</i>	Feb. 17, 2025
6-7	Resume	— — —	— — —

* For all stories, **red arrow** from left margin pointing to headline of student's story.



CAMPUS

Colleges no longer labeled protected from ICE

By Shehzil Imran
Editor-in-Chief

During the last presidential race, Donald Trump and JD Vance told citizens that they will have stricter immigration laws. According to Hunton.com, on Jan. 21, the Department of Homeland Security got rid of a policy established during the Biden-era, in which schools/colleges, hospitals and places of worship were “protected areas.” Meaning, immigration officers were supposed to avoid these spaces.

Given these new circumstances, Dallas College has established an official protocol for staff and faculty to follow if an immigration officer is spotted on campus. “I think that there may be some students who choose not to come to campus very much just because they’re concerned, and I understand that,” Adrien Cueller-McGuire, president of the Brookhaven campus Faculty Association, said. “... I think it’s a very real possibility that [immigration can] come to campus, [but] I hope it doesn’t happen – and I hope that students will still come to campus, still get the education that they’re paying for, that’s so important.”

According to Cueller-McGuire and the district email sent by Dallas College, if an immigration officer is spotted on campus and/or goes to a classroom, faculty and staff have been advised to direct the officer to Brookhaven President Madeline Burillo-Hopkins office in the A Building. Afterwards, Burillo will alert campus police to escort the immigration officer(s) around campus.

It should also be noted that in one

of the emails, Dallas College also said that “under current law, no employee of Dallas College is required to assist federal immigration authorities... absent a warrant.”

If the officer does not want to comply by going to Burillo’s office, the faculty/staff member is advised to call campus security at 972-860-4290. Cueller-McGuire recommended to all members of the Faculty Association to save the campus police’s number in their cell phones. “It would be better than [using] the panic buttons now on the phones there [in the classrooms],” she said. “That kind of heightens the situation for them, because they feel like, ‘Oh no, something’s really wrong,’ and I think it’s very important that we all stay calm, especially for the students, so that they’re not more upset than they might be.”

According to NPR, Trump complained that the issue with immigration under the Biden-era was that Biden allowed a high number of migrants “committing crimes” into the country. Adjunct instructor of government in the School of Law and Public Policy and local attorney David Griggs said that the previous administration was trying to enforce the U.S. asylum laws, which allows individuals who are escaping from political unrest or from serious factors, such as gangs that they need to escape from, to apply for asylum in the country.

During the Trump administration’s first round, they tried to impose a requirement that those previously mentioned immigrants stay in Mexico, under Title 42 – which the Biden administration eliminated,

going back to the original immigration laws. However, Trump’s current administration is now wanting to bring that previous policy from 2016 back.

“It’s just a difference of philosophy as to how you want to approach it,” Griggs said. “... We’ve always been known as a country that accepted immigrants. We have a Statue of Liberty that basically says, ‘we welcome you to come here and start a new life...’ so it does go against the image of America for us to have such a strict policy... we need to have comprehensive immigration reform passed by Congress, and it needs to include all aspects of the immigration question, because part of the system is broken. There’s no doubt, but we can fix it if we can bring the parties together to work on a compromise. The problem is that the two parties are far apart on what they believe is the solution.”

Due to Immigration and Customs Enforcement being allowed in “safe spaces” that they were previously barred from, concern has been raised throughout the country by many people – including those on the Brookhaven campus.

“Let me say this, much of this is vibrato, meaning that it is an attempt to try to scare people,” Griggs said. “They may not ultimately go that far in trying to ‘round up all the immigrants,’ that may not happen. But unfortunately, it’s going to put a fear in a lot of people, especially those who are undocumented.”

Lilian Cordero Lopez, an international student from Mexico at Dallas College, said that while she is not undocumented, she is still worried

WHAT TO KNOW: IMMIGRATION OFFICERS ON CAMPUS

WARRANTS

Unless the ICE officer has a warrant, no employee of Dallas College is required to assist them under current law.

WHAT HAPPENS IF ICE IS SPOTTED

ICE officers are to be directed by staff/faculty to Brookhaven President Madeline Burillo-Hopkins office in the A-Building.

CAMPUS POLICE

Alternatively, ICE can be directed to campus police, which can be contacted at 972-860-4290

STUDENT RESOURCES

- The Concilio – Health/wellness support for immigrant families
- Dallas Legal Aid – Free legal aid
- American Immigration Lawyers Association
- RAICES – The Refugee and Immigrant Center for Education and Legal Services
- Higher Ed Immigration Portal

– More student resources can be found at DallasCollege.edu/CommunityResources

– Students can also find mental health support through Counseling and Psychological Services in Room 5136

Graphic by Shehzil Imran

for people in her network that may not share the same status. “I try to isolate myself a lot from the outside world to avoid... bad experiences,” Lopez said. “Personally, I’ve been... feeling so hopeless and helpless and just feeling like my hands are tied.”

Lopez also said that as someone with brown skin, Native American facial features and Spanish as her first language, she fears that other factors such as racial profiling will contribute to further tension and make people with attributes like her “walking targets.”

“I can’t change who I am,” Lopez said. “No matter how much I do, that’s never going to change... there’s nothing I can do about it. I shouldn’t be doing anything to

take away my identity, who I am. I shouldn’t be hiding who Lilian is, because I was born this – I will die this Mexican with brown skin, Native American facial features, Spanish as a mother tongue. That’s who I am... that’s forever me.”

Griggs said that while he doesn’t think students should have to worry if they do not have a criminal record, as the administration claims they are targeting “migrants with a criminal record,” he still recommends to the community to remain vigilant.

“You would probably want to get an attorney very quickly [and] not say a lot of things to the officers, especially if you have anything to hide, but cooperate,” Griggs said. “I’m also an attorney, so I know that the

best way to deal with that is to fight it in court... if a student has a felony and they are undocumented, that might be more cause for concern, but just average students who are here on an f1 visa, I don’t think that there’s anything to worry about.”

Griggs, Cueller-McGuire and Lopez all acknowledge that these concerns with ICE may take a mental toll on students and advise them to reach out to Dallas College counselors for help and resources. “Prioritize your mental health, look for help,” Lopez said. “With the counselors at Dallas College, if you need them, reach out to them, because they are there for us. Don’t hesitate if you feel like you might need them... [because] it probably means that you do need them.”

Campus food pantry provides community with needed supplies



Photo by James Baptist

Brookhaven’s food pantry supplies community with food and clothing options, as well as items such as diapers.

By Edith Palacios
Contributing Writer

Brookhaven’s food pantry is more than a place to get a meal – it serves students, staff, faculty and the community by lending a hand in ways Brookhaveans may not have otherwise thought of.

The pantry’s mission is to help Brookhaven’s community with daily essentials and provide everyday support for their needs. “The food pantry is here to help students and community members with their daily substance and any available requirement that we can serve to,” said Syed Tulush Shams

Mahmood, a staff member of the food pantry.

The food pantry has expanded its services to frozen goods, snacks, drinks, clothing and child-care products. On a larger scale, the pantry also helps with housing, financial aid support and more.

Brookhaveans now have access

to fresh items like frozen meat, dry products and proteins such as milk and eggs. For those on the go, there are snacks such as cups of ramen, chips and granola bars, which are always in high demand. Additionally, there is a coffee station to keep students fueled for the day.

Student Thi Ngoc Ny frequently visits the food pantry and has also given back by donating clothing to help others. “I usually go to the food pantry to grab a snack before my class,” Ny said. “I get hungry, so I come here to find something like a snack or milk to fill my stomach. It helped me a lot.”

Some may know that Brookhaveans can also get clothes from the pantry. One can go through the variety of donated clothing and find exactly what meets one’s needs, including jackets, sweaters, shirts, pants, suits, ties, dresses and shoes. Each student can receive up to five items a month.

In the winter season, essential warm items become more popular, such as trousers and pants, as well as winter jackets. Mahmood said warm wear gets snatched up

quickly.

Brookhaveans who stop by the pantry can choose two items from their weekly food shopping, as well as two items daily from the grab-and-go selection. They also have an option to choose one item from the freezer or refrigerator each week if they choose.

Parents and single parents can also benefit from the pantry. A few items that are easily accessible are child products, such as car seats and baby strollers. A family care program is also offered to help mothers or parents on campus.

Outside sources referred by the pantry that not many may know about are Catholic Charities, Metro Care and Metro Crest Services. They can also help locate assistance to file a SNAP application. Lashae Miller, Student Care Coordinator and networker said, “This is a no shame, no judgment environment.”

“The fact that it’s open to all is usually a mystery to most of the public that comes by,” Mahmood said. The pantry runs a Community Pantry Days weekly on Fridays, which means the pantry is open to

everyone in the community – not just Brookhaveans. Additionally, they offer Drive-Thru Pantry Days where community members can drive through to pick up free groceries.

Volunteers play a key role at the pantry. Miller encouraged students to get involved. “All we really ask for is that you come with a willingness to help,” Miller said. “You would make the perfect volunteer.” Mentioning an upcoming Drive-Thru Pantry Day on April 22, Miller said they will need extra hands.

“Being a student is not an easy thing to do, so we are here to bridge that gap and fill in with services that we can help to make that a little bit of a smoother process for them,” Miller said.

The more people that sign up, Mahmood said, the better. The community can help the pantry by donating their time and/or non-perishable food as well as gently used clothing. The higher the demand, the more donations the pantry will receive from outside sources.

WISH foundation hosts seminar

By Keannah Perez
Web Editor

The Women in Science and Healthcare Foundation hosted a seminar on Feb. 28 in the Brookhaven campus, where students and staff gathered for food, socialization and a dive into an inspiring journey of the guest speaker, Dr. Sandra Saldana.

The event kicked off with a quick overview of Dallas College’s STEM institute that aims to provide learning experiences for scholars, build connections and become career ready. Iris Duarte-Bazaldua, professor of Biology at Dallas College, served as a moderator for the seminar.

Jovelyn Castellanos, WISH director of initiative and public affairs, was called to do an opening speech where she tackled the basics of health innovation startups. Castellanos said, “The company I work with [WISH] help[s] innovation startup[s] get

funding, internships and resources.”

Castellanos said that a startup begins with ideas and the desire to change the current ways of the healthcare system. “We’re international accelerators, so we have companies based here in Texas, the United States, France and Italy,” she said.

WISH aims to increase the amount of entrepreneurship in science, technology, engineering and management, especially female entrepreneurs. Castellanos said, “Think about those ideas, [like] this could be a different way to deliver mental health or the problem in nursing – know that we’re here to support those.”

Castellanos also encouraged attendees to join in the upcoming Hackathon organized by the Texas Healthcare Challenge. This event features collaborations between various professions and occupations joining together to empower developments, focusing on the assessment

of innovation and business models from different teams. Castellanos said, “If you want to do something fun, learn a lot of things and be at the forefront of healthcare innovation, this is the place to be.” Winning projects can receive up to \$10,000 as a prize, giving the innovators a chance to invest in their project. The TXHCC Hackathon will kickstart on April 4 and last for 2 days. “It’s going to be a great weekend, [with] a lot of fun prizes and funding, it’s also a great way to network,” Castellanos said.

The room was filled with a round of applause as Duarte-Bazaldua introduced the guest speaker, Dr. Sandra Saldana, the CEO and co-founder of Alva Health. According to the invitation sent by Brookhaven biology professor Neda Tousi, “Alva Health is a MedTech startup that is developing a remote monitor that detects neurological injury and stroke

for people living with chronic risk of cardiovascular disease.”

Saldana said, “In Boston, I spent about four to five years in the industry, applying some of the knowledge I gained in my PhD, and started to translate that into the business world.” Saldana took an interest in entrepreneurship and she realized that scientific innovations were bought to life in the business field.

Saldana began to study business and started to build networks with scientists, clinicians and fundraisers. In the question-and-answer segment, Duarte-Bazaldua asked about how Saldana’s interdisciplinary education helped her in leading and solving problems in her company to which Saldana replied, “It is really important to understand both the technical aspect of the product... and how does that actually translate into dollars and making products fly commercially.” She said that her PhD helped her in building the product using scientific methods to materialize her ideas

which was a foundational in her career as a healthcare entrepreneur.

Saldana said, “We’re creating a non-invasive wearable device for real time stroke detection for patients with high risk of stroke.” More than half of stroke survivors sustain chronic disabilities that would require specialized care. The device is focused on detecting early signs of ischemic stroke, giving physicians time to respond and prevent fatalities. “We’re looking for hemiparesis – an asymmetry in the upper body which is a very common symptom of stroke, but it’s very subtle at the beginning so people tend to disregard it until they realize it’s not going away and it’s getting worse.” She said that 90% of the patients do not go to the hospital until six hours later, missing the golden time for treatment. For stroke patients, every minute counts, as the delay of treatment can increase the chances of death or otherwise irreversible damages.

Saldana said, “There’s a mobile app and cloud base monitoring

where we detect signals in real time. There are proprietary algorithms that are used to track symptoms in real time.” This algorithm would send a message to the patient about their symptom and connect them with emergency services. “We automate everything to make sure that stroke patients would get to the hospital as soon as possible,” Saldana said.

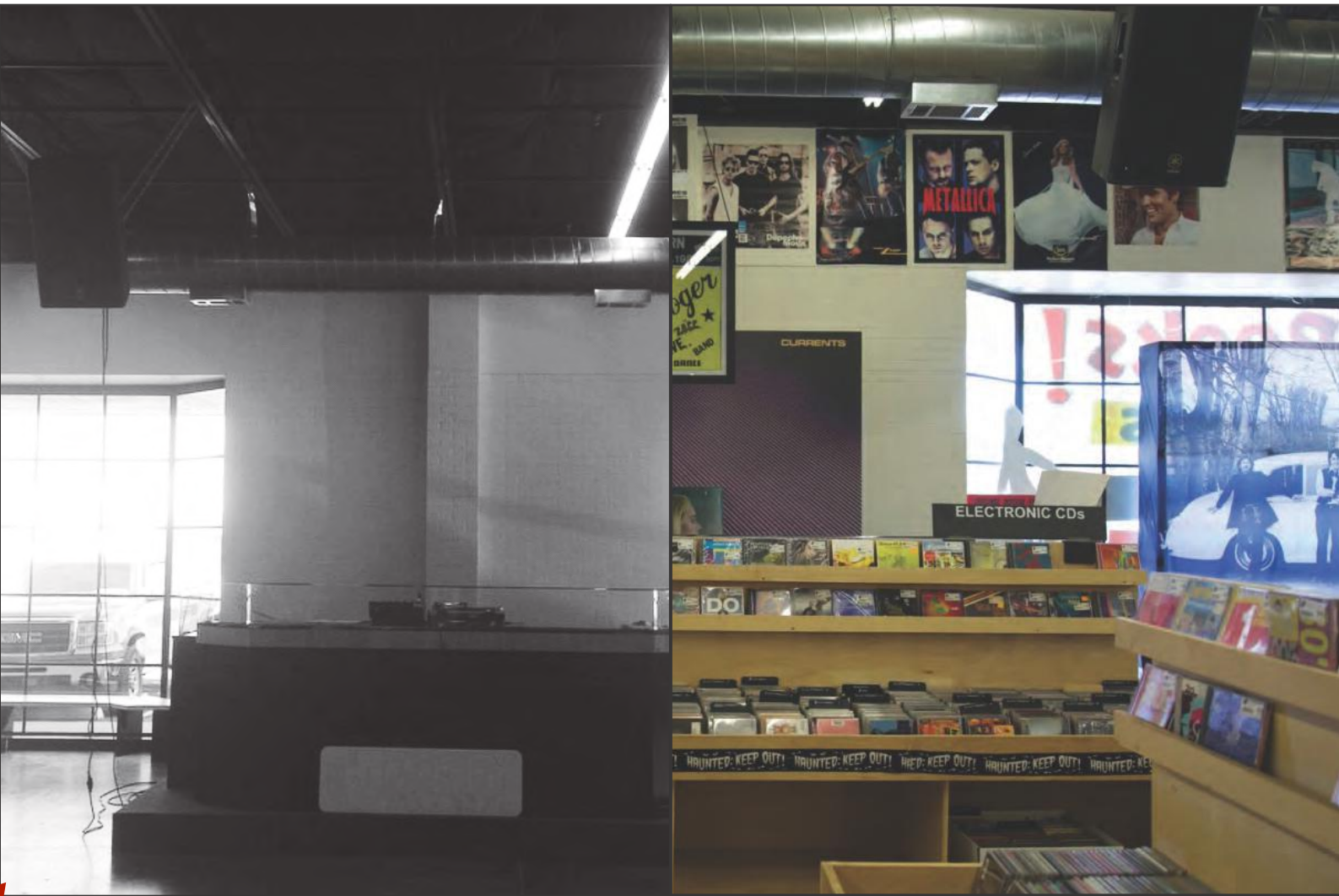
When asked what her advice was to students who are struggling to pick between research path and entrepreneurship, Saldana said, “You don’t have to choose between one or the other. I always followed my passion – I wanted to make impact in people’s lives so I did whatever I had to do.”

Maradith Baker, student at Dallas College, said, “The seminar was fun and very informative.”

The seminar ended with the expression of gratitude to the speakers, and the attendees got the chance to converse with Saldana and voice questions, concerns or ask for advice.



ARTS & CULTURE



Josey records progress from opening (left) to present (right) , highlighting the growth of their store.

Photo by James Baptist

Josey Records marks a decade of success

by Shehzil Imran
Editor-in-chief

From DJing to working corporate jobs with plans of originally opening a quaint music boutique, Josey Records owners Waric Cameron and Luke Sardello opened their first of six record stores on Oct. 20, 2014, marking this year as their tenth open. Years before opening what is now considered the country's largest record store, Cameron and Sardello both worked at Bill's Records and Tapes, a well-known Dallas record store that was owned by the late Bill Wisener. However, the two's time working at Bill's did not overlap, instead they connected as DJs through the local music scene. "I got into DJing and records through a friend of mine, and that opened up a whole world that I just did not know about at the time, and that I was drawn to," Cameron said. "And back then, DJs just knew everybody." Originally, Cameron and Sardello planned to open a small boutique to run on the weekends as a side hustle. Much to their delight, Josey Records gained

traction at rapid speeds, in which the two quit their corporate jobs to dedicate six out of seven days to their new business. "This place is so big that our [initial] concern was just trying to fill it up [and] getting enough inventory to start," Sardello said. "And we work hard to make this thing what it is, I think we always had it in the back of our minds that we want this to be the next tower." Through their early days of DJing, Cameron and Sardello met Ben Lewis, who did installs for music events in the scene. From ten years ago to now, Lewis helped build each location, witnessing how Cameron and Sardello worked to build their "vinyl battleship," he said. "Luke and Waric are inspirations to me," Lewis said. "I was really excited about [helping them,] it's still the coolest project I've ever worked on. It's the biggest record store in America now, just to be a part of that is awesome." Along with the start of Josey Records, Cameron and Sardello owned a vinyl pressing plant, Josey MFG, from around 2015

to 2018 before selling it. However, in 2019 they started a record label, Skylark Soul, specializing primarily in soul jazz, indie rock and indie pop. "Luke and I get approached," Cameron said. "One of the benefits of having a Josey Records, or a successful business like Josey, is that it gives you credibility, and other people want to work with you." In addition to the extensive inventory, Josey Records also hosts events such as album listening parties and live music opportunities. According to Cameron, the biggest event they hosted was in the spring of last year, in which the store was closed down for half the day to host rapper NF and about 2,000 attendees. "We had to zigzag everybody up and down every single aisle, it was insane," Cameron said. "That craziness was pretty memorable. Just imagine all the cars that were around here, people were calling, going, 'What's going on?'" There was just that many people here. In fact, I'm surprised the fire marshal, or the police, did not show up that day." With five locations already

open, the two are currently working on their newest store, their Garland location. "There's a little bit of anxiety with excitement, after we have the grand opening, it's a big sigh of relief," Cameron said. "If it goes well, okay... where else in DFW, or the United States, does there need to be another Josey to serve that community? We're just a vessel for our customers to provide them the best environment to buy their music." Josey Records celebrated their 10 year anniversary on Oct. 19 with a party full of DJing, games and prizes, food and drinks and a sale through the anniversary weekend. "We're proud that we've been able to build what we've built, and are continuing to expand it," Sardello said. "We think we're a pretty big part of keeping vinyl culture alive, not just in Dallas, but everywhere we've opened [Josey Records]. We get people coming, just about every day, on their way back to the airport because they want to check it out. We're kind of this part of the country's Amoeba."

Deep Ellum Party featuring Raekwon and Polyphonic Spree

By Tomas Espinosa
Contributing Writer

This year's Deep Ellum Block Party will take place on Nov. 23 from noon to 7 p.m. Organizers for the Deep Ellum Block Party hope this year's event surpasses expectations with iconic music artists and new activities. Wu-Tang Clan member Raekwon and The Polyphonic Spree are set to co-headline the free-to-attend block party. As the name suggests, the Deep Ellum Block Party takes place in the heart of the iconic, historically significant, cultural and musical epicenter of Dallas' Deep Ellum area. The area has been a hotbed for up-and-coming talented musicians since it became a destination for blues musicians in the 1920s. Attendees can expect to see Deep Ellum's history as the birthplace of Dallas' music scene — from the bluesy licks of Blind Lemon Jefferson to the punk and indie sounds that define today's landscape — to be front and center. Boasting an eclectic mix of genres spanning from blues and punk to cumbia and beyond, the Block Party's organizers hope to reflect Deep Ellum's vast variety of musical talent that can be experienced across the district's more than 25 venues every week and weekend.

dubbed the "Family Zone," explore a beer garden, shoot some hoops and, of course, listen to live music. "There will be 40 bands, and I am the most excited for Raekwon," said the event's booker/promoter Gavin Mulloy. "The neighborhood scavenger hunt is an activity to not miss out on." There's no surprise Mulloy is looking forward to Corey Woods, aka Raekwon The Chef, as he is one of the most sought-after voices in the entertainment industry thanks to his role as a founding member of the hip-hop group Wu-Tang Clan. The Polyphonic Spree is an orchestral, choral band from Dallas that significantly impacted culture as they have toured the U.S. and inspired audiences for the past 24 years. Last year, the neighborhood hosted Rev. Run, Doug E. Fresh, and hometown heroes such as The Grays, R.C. Williams and Friends, Cure for Paranoia and Cayuga All-Stars for an inaugural Deep Ellum Music Festival honoring the 150th anniversary of the Deep Ellum Cultural District. This year, according to the event organizers, the district is "digging even deeper to showcase all facets of the community's arts and cultural offerings in one energy-packed day." Eateries will be serving up their "best bites" while others offer drink specials and deals at neighborhood hotspots. This festival is also a friendly space for those with disabilities, Mulloy said. "There is handicapped parking, and the street is shut down to make it accessible for everyone."

To help celebrate the unique culture of Deep Ellum, Elm Street will be shut down to traffic and blocked off from Good Latimer to Malcolm X for what is sure to be an unforgettable bash. Attendees can watch artists create live murals, have a chance to win prizes in giveaways, gaze at antique cars, visit an area



Courtesy of Deep Ellum Foundation



Photos by Shehzil Imran



Denton Camera Exchange owner Armand Kohadani develops an 8x10 photo of PolaCon attendees Naomi Adeyemi and Paige Bradley.

By Shehzil Imran
Editor-in-Chief

The ninth PolaCon, an instant film event hosted by the Instant Film Society, took place from Sept. 27-29 at Rubber Gloves Rehearsal Studio in Denton. The conference consisted of three

Artists gathered for PolaCon workshops and demo

days of demos, panel discussions, workshops and vendors as well as, for the first time, a week-long music festival each night from Sept. 23-29. "A lot of people think you can't buy the film anymore, so the more that we do this, the more awareness we raise," Instant Film Society board member Alexas Monroe said. "When I was 19, I got a Polaroid cool cam and as soon as I took the first photo I loved the sound, pulling the polaroid out of the camera and waiting... it brought me so much joy." PolaCon had a variety of demos and workshops, some varying depending on the day attended. For example, Friday had an instant film scavenger hunt, Saturday was primarily Instant Film Society's zine swap and Sunday had an 8x10 polaroid demo. On Saturday Sept. 28, Jen Brimmage did a demo on cyanolumen prints, showing attendees a variety of examples she has made as well as helping others make their own.

"If you know anyone who has old expired dark room paper, this is a great way to use it, no perfectionism involved," Brimmage said. "And based on the type of paper, the colors are going to be different... I love it. It's just a fun way to be creative and see what happens." In addition to the demos and workshop opportunities, Saturday's PolaCon event held space for vendors to sell items such as jewelry, photographs, artwork and zines. Some vendors such as Lu Louve, selling her photography prints and mixed media work, showcased items at PolaCon for the first time. "I collage on polaroid, I try to use my duds so I can repurpose them," Louve said. "I started shooting polaroids about five years ago, and then I had a head concussion... I couldn't really go out to shoot. So, I just started collaging in the meantime while I was in recovery, and that's how it came to be." PolaCon got its start in Denton but throughout the years has

progressed to hold events out of Texas as well. Attending PolaCon a few years ago, Brian Brooks from San Francisco helped bring the conference to the Bay Area. "I own a photo lab in West Oakland, [and] I'm all about analog, chemistry's in my blood," Brooks said. "It's a community, and it's so niche, last year we closed the street off and had the first polaroid block party, it was good." As PolaCon has made its way to different areas of the country, it has gained a steady following from analog photography enthusiasts. Kevin O'Donnell, for example, has attended PolaCon in New York and the Bay Area, with this year being his first conference in Denton. "There's a camaraderie and a lot of shared learning [at these events,] I learn something new every single time I come to one," O'Donnell said. "It's very niche and incredibly small. It's just nice to know there's other people who are adamant or excited about instant photography."



OPINION

Protests deserve to be protected

On March 4, in response to the increase of college campus protests in support of Palestine, or affiliated causes, President Donald Trump posted, on Truth Social, a threat to pull funding from any college,



Denyse Silva

school or university that allows illegal protests to occur on school grounds. In the same post, he threatens to deport international students and expel or, depending on the crime, arrest American students. Trump has boasted the arrest of Mahmoud Khalil, a Gaza activist of Palestinian descent and Syrian national, who organized protests at Columbia University in spring of 2024, claiming he is the first of many arrests to come. Columbia University has become a primary player within the pro-Gaza protest scene, being credited as a catalyst of campus protests across the U.S., as well as a pinnacle of campus unrest.

As of March 17, around \$400 million dollars in government grants have been barred from Columbia and 60 colleges are facing

investigations for allegedly enabling anti-Israel activity. Federal officials have ordered, among other things, that Columbia’s Middle Eastern studies program be placed under academic receivership, in which the program funds are controlled by an appointed third party – a move unprecedented in the United States. Therefore, Columbia’s response has the ability to reverberate through the nation and possibly mark the end of pedagogical independence in higher education.

But why is the federal government so concerned about the rise of pro-Gaza activism? Those who oppose the movement regularly confuse pro-Palestinian activism with pro-Hamas activism, a terrorist organization and anti-Israel, and therefore antisemitic. Yet, Elon Musk faced no consequences for gesturing a salute reminiscent of Heil Hitler, followed by telling a far-right German political party, the AFD, to not feel guilty about the country’s past crimes.

Every question we can ask about government under this administration is incessantly nuanced but likely does not involve protecting Jewish people, American or not. As long as Israel remains a democracy, it will continue to be a geopolitical U.S. pawn in the Middle East, serving as a counter to Iran and a moral

cushion to uphold American ideology of democracy and antisemitism.

We are making moral arguments, in protest, to those driven by money and power. They, in turn, make moral arguments to capture those of us who are angry, seeking to point the finger at immigrants, women, poor people or any other minorities that have seemingly benefitted at my or your expense. The party of free speech, Christianity and constitutional principles has spiraled into anti-intellectualism and sensationalism, because they were adopted as a recruitment tactic rather than an ideology. These topics are not sensationalized in the name of higher values, but to service the anger felt by those who feel politically slighted.

Trump does not care about the legality or volatility of protests; around 1,500 Capitol rioters were pardoned by Trump on Jan. 22 of this year. He does not care about immigrant opinions until they oppose him; he allowed Myriam Witcher, a Columbian-born naturalized citizen, to scream her support on his Las Vegas rally stage in 2015, but openly praised the arrest of Khalil, which led to the revoking of his permanent resident status. Marco Rubio, the U.S. Secretary of State, commented on Khalil’s arrest, claiming free speech was



Illustration by Isabel Velázquez

not relevant to the situation, and instead, “This is about people that don’t have a right to be in the United States to begin with.”

Voters want a fight, but the Democratic Party, which has built itself upon government institutions and more educated populations, is unlikely to harness the sensational anger that is making the GOP successful. Asking it to do so would almost directly contradict its foundation, and if Democrats did, it almost certainly

would be the different side of the same vengeful coin. Just 27% of registered voters approved of the Democratic Party in a recent NBC poll, hitting an all-time low.

Every day, we witness political history writing itself — but without a fight, what textbooks will be written? Years from now, children will read about today and ask, “Why didn’t anyone do anything?” As students, as individuals and as people living on American soil, we may have inherited a bad

political hand, but it’s not enough to be up in arms and waiting for a savior. Not only is it our responsibility to protect the rights we personally enjoy; we must stand up for those who have no voice. Fight with your wallet, and if that isn’t available to you, arm yourself with knowledge. Above all, stay informed; our rights proving to be infinitely fragile, and as comfortable as we have become, ignorance is a luxury we can no longer afford.

Taking the ‘free’ away from free press

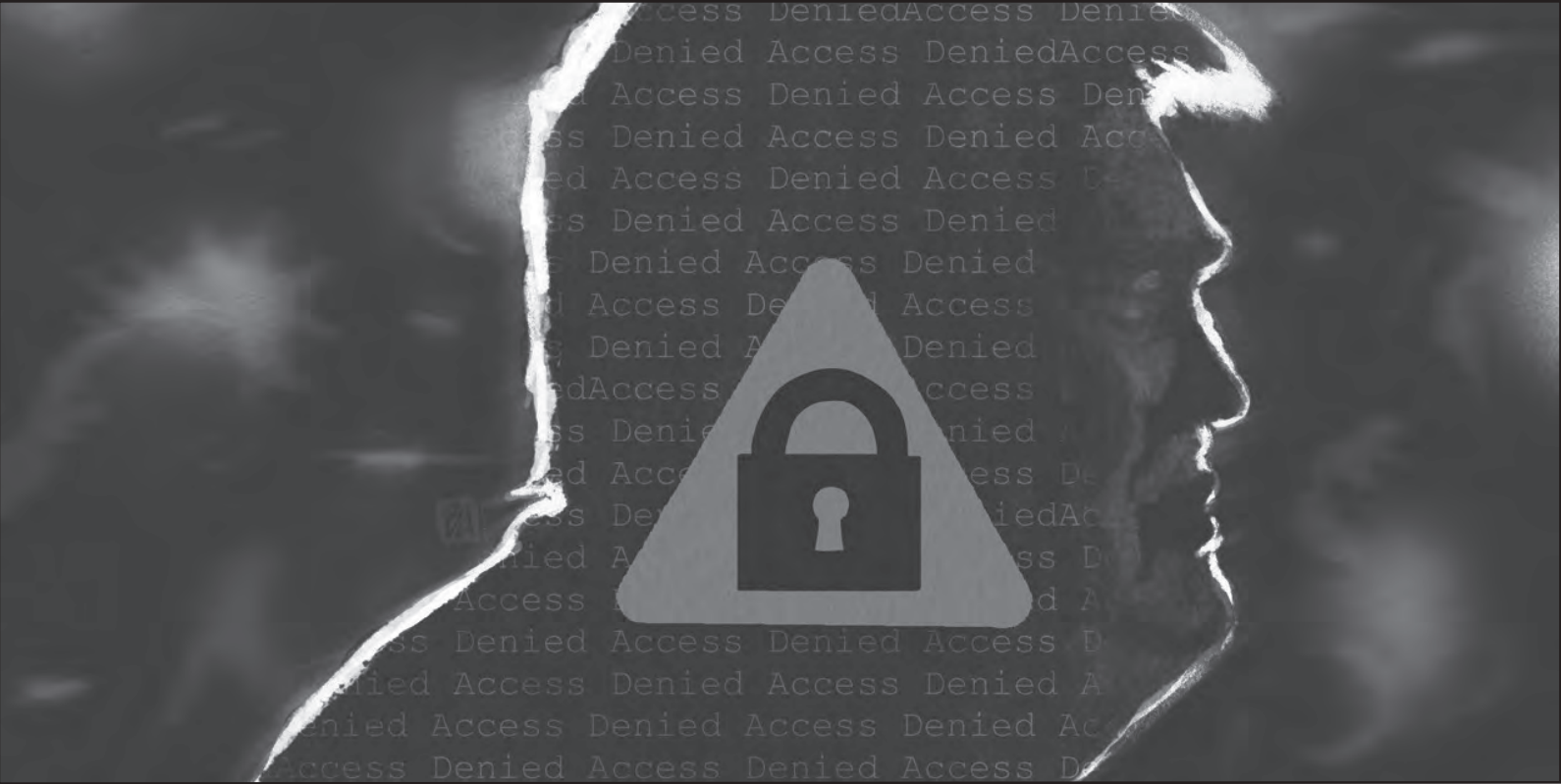


Illustration by Bao Duong

The state of the free press is a hot topic amongst both journalists and readers, becoming increasingly more controversial through events from the recent administration under President Donald Trump. As a student journalist who also plans to pursue journalism as my future career, the freedom of the press is of utmost importance to me – it’s



Shehzil Imran

a civil liberty that is not always protected in the ways it truly should be. On Feb. 9, the White House announced that the Gulf of Mexico will be renamed to the Gulf of America. In a press release from the Department of Interior, this name change is apparently meant to “honor the legacy of American greatness.” While the executive order was signed, it should be noted that the rest of the world still refers to this body of water as the Gulf of Mexico, which is supported by Google and Apple Maps both only changing the name for users in the United States, according to the New York Times.

Due to this change, The Associated Press – known for its unbiased reporting – has stated that since the publication reports to “billions of people around the world every

day,” it would not make sense to change their editorial guidelines. On Feb. 11, AP released a statement disclosing that the White House told them that they will be banned from accessing events in the Oval Office. According to CNN, this is an indefinite decision, barring reporters from “pooled events.”

To make matters worse, according to NPR, District Court Judge Trevor McFadden – appointed by Trump – denied the AP from temporarily allowing its reporters to continue coverage of “major events at the White House.”

The AP is well-known for its nonpartisan coverage of news, and while they are not the only publication to continue referring to this part of the ocean as the Gulf of Mexico, it is the one being targeted the most for it. To remove such an influential and well-established publication from being in the needed spaces to report critical information to the public is inexcusable on the White House’s part. It blocks citizens from getting accessible and reliable news from trustworthy and nonpolarized sources. It also just allows for the White House to continue to bar anyone that they do not agree with from press events.

To further these concerns, on Jan. 28 CNN anchor Jim Acosta announced that he will be leaving CNN. According to AP, during Trump’s first week in office, CNN said that they would change their network lineup. Acosta, who had

an hour-long segment in the morning, was offered a late-night slot. However, Acosta turned this down. While that statement alone may not sound like a big deal, Acosta’s official announcement seemed to imply as if there was more to his reason for leaving – a final message that should be taken as a warning and wake up call.

During his parting speech, Acosta reflected on what he considered the highlight of his career – covering former president Barack Obama’s 2016 trip to Cuba, in which he confronted dictator Raul Castro “about the island’s prisoners.” Acosta, whose father was a Cuban refugee, said that moment taught him an important lesson. “It is never a good time to bow down to a tyrant,” Acosta said. “I have always believed it’s the job of the press to hold power to account.”

Acosta proceeds to give the audience what he called his “final message.” He said, “Don’t give into the lies. Don’t give into the fear. Hold on to the truth and to hope.” While Acosta did not specifically call out Trump in his speech, given the tension in the current social and political climate due to the current administration, it would not be out of line to assume the implication.

Before Acosta’s official exit from CNN, Trump went on his social media platform, Truth Social, and said, “Jim is a major loser who will fail no matter where he ends up.” It should also be noted

that Trump and Acosta do not get along, as the two shared a heated exchange during a press conference in 2018, which resulted in Acosta’s press credentials being temporarily revoked.

Acosta’s chilling warning before departing with the network he’s been with for 18 years, in addition to the AP’s reporters not being allowed to cover certain events, sets a dangerous precedent for the future of free press in the United States. As a citizen who finds it important to have accessible, reliable and unbiased news, revoking a publication’s ability to do this will inhibit citizens from being able to easily know what is going on.

While reporters such as Acosta have given “subtle” warnings about what dangers could potentially come, this does not mean that all journalists and publications will follow suit. It’s more likely that certain topics may not receive proper coverage due to fears of upsetting the “wrong people,” and ending up in situations where a reporter may lose access to resources or be censored.

It is important, especially now, for not only journalists to pay attention to concerns such as censorship and the freedom of the press, but for citizens to heed where their news is coming from and how people in power respond to reporters covering “controversial topics.”



THE BROOKHAVEN COURIER

Award-winning student news since 1978

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF	Shehzil Imran
MANAGING EDITOR	Jacqueline Sastre
ART DIRECTOR	Isabel Velázquez
COPY EDITORS	Erin Dion Denyse Silva
PHOTO EDITOR	James Baptist
LAYOUT EDITOR	Mary Almanza
ILLUSTRATORS	Joshua D. Ceasar Bao Duong Brandon Mendoza
WEB EDITOR	Keannah Perez
STAFF WRITERS	Danni Lainez Jose Salas MJ Smith
CONTRIBUTING WRITERS	Fata Al Aradi Celso Ipiná Ryan Kim Estefania Robayo Buelvas Edith Palacios Bashua Ramos Dmitri Zul
FACULTY ADVISER	Daniel Rodrigue
STUDENT MEDIA ADVISER	Jubenal Aguilar
EDITORIAL CONSULTANT	Rori Callaway
PROGRAM FOUNDER	Dr. John Neal

The Brookhaven Courier, a designated public forum, is published monthly as a laboratory publication of the journalism and photography classes at Dallas College Brookhaven Campus. Any thoughts or ideas, either expressed or implied, in this publication, are those of the writer and do not necessarily represent those of the administration, faculty or student body of Brookhaven Campus. The Brookhaven Courier welcomes feedback from our readers. Letters may be published without a name, but the original letter must include a signature and phone number, or it will not be published. The Courier reserves the right to edit letters for spelling, libel, grammar and length.



ARTS & CULTURE

Influential director David Lynch dead at 78



David Lynch, known for works such as “Twin Peaks,” “Mulholland Drive” and “Blue Velvet,” died on Jan. 15 at the age of 78 from complications of emphysema. Lynch’s final project was an album with singer/actress Chrystabell.

By Shehzil Imran Editor-in-Chief

Director David Lynch died on Jan. 15 at the age of 78. Lynch, a smoker since the age of eight, died from complications of emphysema – a condition he was diagnosed with in 2020.

Lynch was best known for his surrealist style of filmmaking, seen most notably in movies such as “Eraserhead,” “Blue Velvet” and “The Elephant Man.” While he now has the label of an auteur — a filmmaker with a very distinctive style in each movie — Lynch didn’t always plan to be a director.

Originally, Lynch planned to be a painter and attended the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts. Though Lynch eventually moved to Los Angeles and switched his focus primarily to filmmaking, he never actually stopped painting and trying different forms of art.

According to Pace Gallery, Lynch experimented with different mediums such as photography, printmaking and sculptures. Much like his movies, Lynch’s art was usually abstract, often inspired by surrealism and art brut. In an interview with Border Crossings, Lynch said, “All I wanted was to be a painter... it led quite quickly to this thing of dedicating my life to painting and the art life, it was the most freeing thing.”

According to BBC, Lynch’s switch from painting to filmmaking occurred while he was in the middle of painting and a breeze of wind blew across his canvas. Essentially, he wanted to be able to make his artwork move and decided filmmaking was the right medium to express ideas that painting alone could not. “David Lynch is a genius with a style like no one else’s, like it or hate it,” Brookhaven film professor Darise Error said. “He’s very unique and has a penchant for weird and different storylines.”

Lynch released his first full feature film, “Eraserhead,” in 1977, which is often interpreted to be about the anxieties of fatherhood.

Initially, Lynch wanted to create a surrealist film called “Gardenback,” based off a painting of his. However, he received pushback from his advisers at the American Film Institute and couldn’t rewrite the script in a way he liked. Eventually, Lynch took a 21 page script he had of “Eraserhead” and decided he would simply turn that into a movie instead. The film took about five years to create, primarily due to struggles securing funding, which ended up performing poorly in the box office upon its release.

“Eraserhead” received plenty of negative reviews, with critics finding the surrealism of the film to be

eccentric characters and complex storylines. The show was an immediate hit in the ’90s and, according to The Guardian, had about 35 million viewers tuning in for the pilot episode alone. The use of the signature Lynchian movie style in a television series ultimately paved the way for more unique and “weird” shows to be picked up for air later on. The show’s cult following has remained strong throughout the years, even resulting in a 2017 reboot season called “Twin Peaks: The Return.”

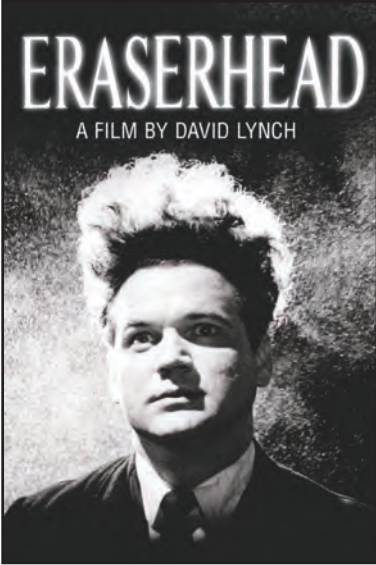
Lynch’s reputation of making abstract films with unsettling imagery open to interpretation is what wound up earning him the title of an auteur. His impact on the film and television industry can be seen in other directors such as Quentin Tarantino, David Chase and Carlton Cuse. “I think he helped give us a tolerance for weird things,” Error said. “He took funky and made it cool and something you wanted to talk about, which allowed other filmmakers to begin to tell more complex and interesting kinds of stories too.”

While Lynch ultimately had to take a step back from filmmaking due to his emphysema, he also expressed frustration over the current state of Hollywood. Error said Lynch was upset that the industry seemed to be taking priority over using big special effects and reusing ideas to create prequels and sequels in substitution to actual plot.

In an Instagram post, Netflix CEO Ted Sarandos said that Lynch pitched a series to the company, but they decided to postpone production due to “health uncertainties.” Lynch’s final project ended up being an album titled “Cellophane Memories” released Aug. 2, 2024 with musician and “Twin Peaks: The Return” actress Chrystabell. “[David Lynch is a] huge loss,” Error said. “The fact that he kind of backed off of filmmaking for a while... makes me kind of sad, but I sure am glad that we have the body of work that we do – he grew the industry.”

BINGE WATCH THIS

DAVID LYNCH EDITION
Shehzil Imran, Dmitri Zul
Editor-in-Chief, Contributing Writer



“ERASERHEAD” (1977)

Despite the initial negative reviews upon its release, David Lynch’s first feature film, “Eraserhead,” has become a cult classic throughout the years and for a good reason. The surrealist film follows new – and unexpected – father, Henry Spencer (Jack Nance), who is left to care for his abnormal child. What I love most about this movie is how abstract and ambiguous it is. It gives the viewer a lot to think about in terms of connecting the dots. Through a disturbing and nightmare-ish depiction, “Eraserhead” explores the anxieties and fear of fatherhood. The viewer sees

Henry’s internal struggles with free will and responsibility as he finds it difficult to fully grasp onto the new change in his life. Additionally, the black and white cinematography was an excellent choice. Not only did it fit the aesthetic of the film, but it made it feel all the more haunting and colder. I’ll admit that this movie isn’t for everyone, as it can be a bit out there. However, if you’re willing to give more “weird” conceptual films a try and enjoy having room to interpret the story for yourself, “Eraserhead” deserves a watch.

TW: Mature language, mild violence, disturbing imagery
- SI

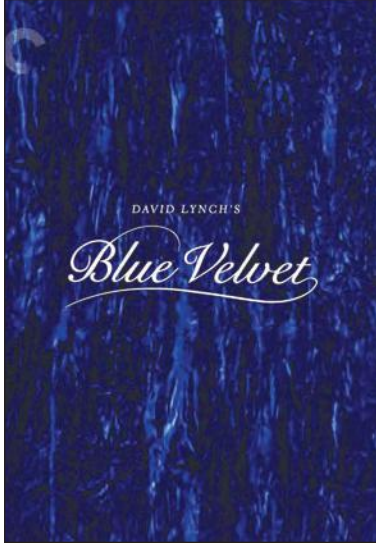


“MULHOLLAND DRIVE” (2001)

“Mulholland Drive” is an amazing, dreamlike film. The plot follows aspiring actress Betty (Naomi Watts), who takes in and helps an amnesiac woman (Laura Harring) after she stumbles into Betty’s aunt’s home as a result of a car crash. However, as the movie continues, you realize that nothing is as neat and tidy as it seems. Taking place in Hollywood, Lynch does an excellent job at paralleling the turmoil between the characters to the dirty reality of Hollywood underneath the dreamy glitz and glamour. As with all of Lynch’s projects,

a viewer would be naive to assume “Mulholland Drive” is upfront with its approach. Throughout the first half of the movie, I kept thinking about how well-done the film was. Yet it somehow got even better by the end, and I simply had to sit there and rethink all the details. In fact, I wanted to immediately rewatch the movie just to look at it from a different perspective. “Mulholland Drive” is truly genius with an abundance of thought and symbolism put into it, and there’s a reason it’s often revered as one of Lynch’s best films.

TW: Strong language, violence, suicide, sexual content, nudity
- SI

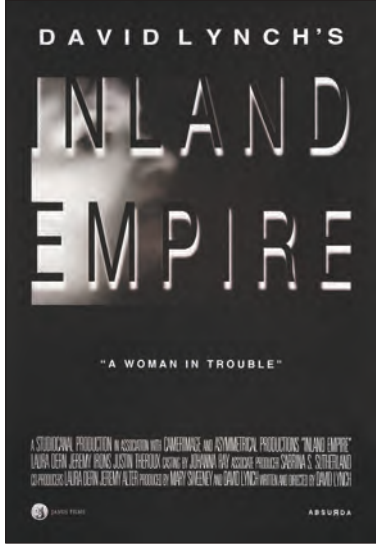


“BLUE VELVET” (1986)

Controversial for its deranged nature, “Blue Velvet” feels like a crazy fever dream. Jeffrey Beaumont (Kyle MacLachlan) returns to his hometown after his father has a stroke, only to find a severed ear in a field. Beaumont joins forces with the main detective’s daughter, Sandy Williams (Laura Dern), to find out where the ear came from. Through this, he encounters Dorothy Vallens (Isabella Rossellini), a mysterious and alluring lounge singer who is believed to be connected to the case. Though all of Lynch’s films have many elements, I found “Blue Velvet” to be the most bizarre of them all. I admired how

Lynch used the differences between Sandy and Dorothy – as well as Beaumont’s interactions with them – to create a juxtaposition of innocence and darkness. It explored the ideas of evil hidden beyond a perfect exterior, corruption and the duality of human nature/desire. The actors bring such raw emotion to the table, which added an unsettling feeling and made the movie frightening in a way. While “Blue Velvet” is a difficult watch due to its subject matter, the approach of these serious themes leaves the viewer with a bigger picture worth contemplating.

TW: Sexual abuse, nudity, mature language, violence, substance use
- SI

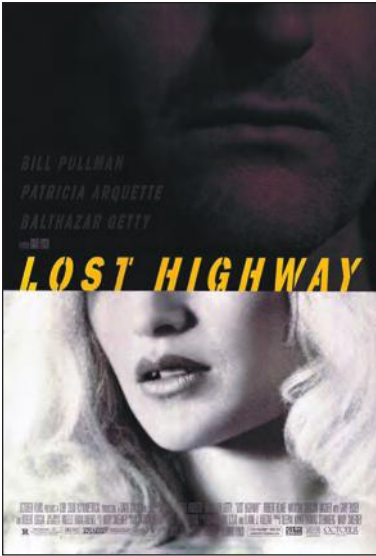


“INLAND EMPIRE” (2006)

“Inland Empire” lands in a unique space in Lynch’s filmography. It was his last film prior to his death; it was recorded on a Sony camcorder and was shot without a finished screenplay. Quite the surrealist circumstances lead up to this film. “Inland Empire” is about a Hollywood actress named Nikki (Laura Dern) who gets casted to star in a cursed film. The film feels disjointed, and the dream aspects occur so subtly that you must take a step back to realize that the characters are in a dream, and you didn’t

even know. We see Nikki move back and forth between her real life and morphing into the life of this cursed film. This film, in my opinion, is what I consider to be underrated among Lynch’s filmographies. Yet, it’s such a unique experience compared to his other movies for being more out there and having a unique approach in the making of this film – all the while having that twisted nightmare fueled story one would expect from Lynch.

TW: Language, some violence, sexuality/nudity
- DZ



“LOST HIGHWAY” (1997)

David Lynch takes the neo noir genre into a male power fantasy driven story. The lighting of this film is grim and foreboding with a very complimentary soundtrack that keeps the edge up through the entire film. It breaks reality and fantasy very well to the point where it feels like you are watching two different films. The film follows Fred (Bill Pullman) and his hatred of the kind of man he sees himself as. He ends up imagining himself as a different person living a different life where he could make changes as he sees fit. If I had to sum up this movie,

it would be a nightmare mafia-esque film done quite well.

TW: Language, violence, sex/nudity
- DZ



SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGERS WANTED!

No experience required!



THE BROOKHAVEN COURIER

For more information, email us at
bhccourier@dcccd.edu or stop by Room U241



Shehzil Imran

Experience

Feb. 2025 - *Current*

Reporter *Branch Herald*

Responsible for finding local stories/pitches, locating sources, taking photos, researching and writing articles, attending biweekly staff meetings and copy-editing newsletters/articles each week.

Aug. 2024 - *Current*

Editor-in-Chief *The Brookhaven Courier*

Responsible for writing articles, overseeing staff, leading meetings to discuss content for paper and budgeting the paper layout. Additionally, I copy edit each article, help fact check and utilize InDesign to design the layout for each print edition.

March 2024 – Aug. 2024

Staff Writer *The Brookhaven Courier*

Reaching out to sources, researching articles and getting them written to be edited and published in a quick, timely manner.

May 2022 – Dec. 2023

Feature Editor *The Hebron Hawk Eye*

Approving and denying feature article pitches each publication cycle, checking in with staff members on whether deadlines will be met, researching and tracking down sources and attending staff meetings to problem solve issues among the staff.

May 2022 – May 2023

Social Media Manager *The Hebron Hawk Eye*

Creating and posting graphics on social media, as well as updating followers whenever any staff member published an article onto the website or when the publication released its quarterly print edition.

Jan. 2022 – Dec. 2023

Staff Writer *The Hebron Hawk Eye*

Responsible for finding pitches, locating sources, taking photos, researching and writing articles ranging from sports and news to a reoccurring blog, and copy-editing articles.

Education

Jan. 2024 - Current

A.A.

Dallas College
Brookhaven

Skills

Communication
Copy editing
Fact checking
Researching
Organization
Leadership
Problem solving
Adobe InDesign
Adobe Lightroom
Adobe Photoshop
Photography

Contact

214-682-5072

Shezimran16@gmail.com