

The Dateline



University of Houston-Downtown's Newspaper
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Studio Art students express themselves in new mural

By Marlonn Bahena
 Studio art class working on mural voted by student body.

Down on the second floor next to student activities, lies the art mural done by students of Studio Art.

Lead by Instructor Beth Secor, the class was assigned a wall by the university, whose mission was to express the thought of what UHD meant to them.

"Each student worked a couple of weeks on a design" said Secor, "then those designs were presented to the student body, and the student body voted on them."

With over a thousand student votes, the student

whose design was chosen was Anjel Quesada.

"I wanted to do something that was significant and not just decorative," Quesada said.

Based on Aztec codices, Quesada wanted something that resonated with the history, since the majority of the UHD population is Latino.

"I'm tricking people into learning about their culture" Quesada explains, "because you're not going to really look at codices unless maybe you go to a museum in Mexico, take an anthropology class, or Aztec history class, but I've adapted it into modern times."

A trick with good intentions, Quesada wanted

something that sticks with students, and makes it a memorable mural with a lot going on.

"That's what excites me about making art. Quesada said, "it's the power of images to change a place. They can reflect things, they can make a place more of a landmark."

Another studio art student Raul Noyola-Acosta, states how this mural had resonated with him.

"Honestly, I voted for this one. I thought it was cool. I really liked the Hispanic aspects of it that I can really embrace," he said.

Noyola-Acosta's original design had made



Anjel Quesada overseeing his art work come to fruition
 Photo by Marlonn Bahena

it to the top three, which placed second.

"I was really surprised by it," Noyola-Acosta describes. "Because I was the only one in the class who submitted a digital design."

Inspired by art installations, Noyola-Acosta

was not 100% sure with his design, but overall content with how far he got in the process.

"The validation of having people vote for it and making it really far in the process was just very fulfilling," Acosta explains. "So once the

president decided on something else I was like 'Ok perfect'. I got that validation from my peers, even though I didn't have to do all the work."

With new Gator Card, UHD readies GatorCash program

By Christopher Charleston

As the University of Houston-Downtown continues to expand -- attempting to emerge as a major player in higher education in Texas -- school officials are attempting to make changes that represent the university's desire to create an atmosphere resembling the university's counterparts around the state.

One of those changes is a new program scheduled to launch in the Spring of 2020.

According to Mary Torres, Director of Business Services, UHD's new "Gator Card" will

be a way of integrating a number of functions for daily usage on campus. "...Implemented to the new Gator Card, will be a declining balance function. [This function] will allow students, faculty or staff to load funds onto the ID card and utilize those funds at any UHD Dining Services location. These funds will be called GatorCash."

Though students will be able to use GatorCash to purchase food at UHD dining areas, Torres says that meal plans will not be available.

"It is not a meal plan." She said, adding however, "A declining

balance option offers the cardholder the ability to preload funds and have them available for use for on-campus meal purchases. This will big a big help in assisting students in managing their money by storing funds they budget for meals."

Though programs similar to GatorCash have existed on most college campuses in recent years, UHD's will be available to students nearly 46 years after the university was founded in 1974.

GatorCash continued on page 2

SAGA elects new vice president, amid controversy

By Jaida Doll

UHD's Sexuality and Gender Alliance (SAGA) elected its new Vice President, Fatima Saleck, on October 9, 2019. Though Saleck ran unopposed at the time of the election, there was much controversy surrounding her original opponent.

The controversy began when Saleck's opponent made recurring, but minorly problematic comments. SAGA officers, Carmen Hernandez (SAGA President) and Nathan Diffey (SAGA Treasurer and Trans UHD President) planned to address these issues with the candidate. But this was easier said than done.

As Diffey explains. "We first wanted to bring this issue up with him and

simply warn him, but he became more aggressive, the closer the election got."

Those comments, which much of the group considered hateful and aggressive, escalated to the point of racial and gendered slurs. Such slurs, as well as several lewd comments were directed toward another member of the group.

Behavior such as this is in opposition to

SAGA's mission as an organization. As SAGA is an extension of the Center for Diversity and Inclusion, it aims to be a wholly inclusive, empowering, and safe space for LGBTQ+ students.

As stated by SAGA's constitution, "The purpose of UHD SAGA is to

SAGA continued on page 3






Photo courtesy of Carmen Hernandez

Inside this edition

News	2
Gator Life.....	3
Arts & Entertainment.....	4
Opinions.....	6
Sports	8

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Bayou Ballot: Are you informed about the Presidential impeachment inquiry proceedings?

By Christopher Charleston

Several weeks after House Speaker Nancy Pelosi first announced a formal impeachment inquiry would begin against President Donald Trump, major news on the investigation has been mum.

Only 2 out of the 44 past Presidents have successfully been impeached, so it's understandable that there is little that is (publicly) known of the process.

Still, the slightest possibility of impeachment of the nation's highest office has us all on the edge of our seats. No matter who you support, the outcome of the inquiry likely will have major ramifications for the country, and it's important to stay informed.

The impeachment

inquiry stems from a whistleblower's accusation that President Trump threatened to withhold military aid from Ukraine in an effort to force the country to investigate 2020 Presidential candidate, Joe Biden.

But what does it actually mean to impeach?

In the context of a presidential impeachment, it simply means to bring charges in congress that form the basis of a trial. An impeachment inquiry is simply the act of forming a group to look into the possibility of an impeachment. That is where we are currently at.

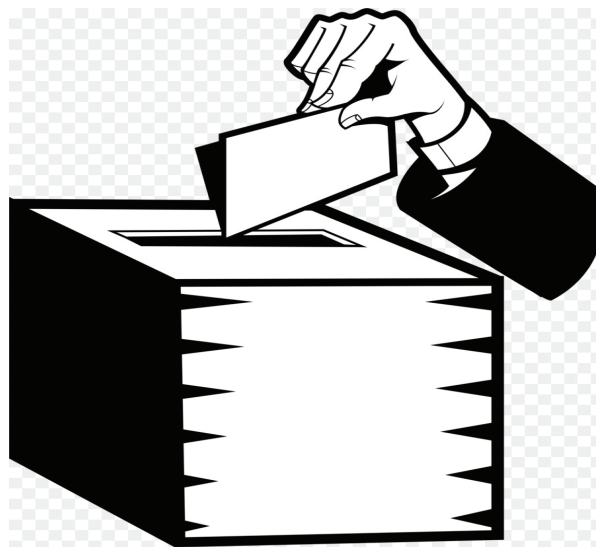
If sufficient evidence of wrongdoing is found, the House then votes on the articles of impeachment, at which point, a simple majority vote leads to an official impeachment of the President, and a trial by the Senate.

With so many steps to the removal of a sitting president, it is clear to see why it has only happened twice.

The last president to be impeached was Bill Clinton in 1998, however, he was not removed from office.

With no real blueprint of the impeachment process, there is no way of predicting how this all will play out. News sources have adjusted their day-to-day proceedings in order to remain flexible should any breaking news occur.

Though what will happen in the coming weeks regarding the Presidential impeachment inquiry is still uncertain, every day, tiny pieces of information pertaining to it continue to fall into place, some shifted by Democrats and some by Republicans.



The Dateline would like to know:

Do you consider yourself to be informed on the Presidential Impeachment inquiry proceedings?

Visit our Instagram page

@The_Dateline and click on the link in the bio to vote and let us know!

Will Title VII cases extend sex to sexuality?

By Jaida Doll

In October 2019, three cases surfaced in the Supreme Court concerning workplace discrimination against LGBT+ employees. Two of these cases (Altitude Express v. Zarda and Bostock v. Clayton County, Georgia) involved gay men who claimed they were terminated for their sexuality. The third case (R.G. & G.R. Harris Funeral Homes Inc. v. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission) involved a transgender woman terminated two weeks after informing her supervisor of her decision to transition.

The Supreme Court is currently determining whether Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 extends to protect LGBT+ employees. The Civil Rights Act prohibits workplace "discrimination, based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin." But the legality of workplace discrimination—based on sexuality and gender identity—is still undecided.

Those against the extension of Title VII cite arguments of textuality and

originality. They argue that as the Civil Rights Act was devised in 1964, it was not originally intended to protect LGBT+ employees, so it should not currently extend to protect them.

They further argue that the text of Title VII is not concerned with sexuality and gender identity. Since biological sex cannot be equated to sexuality or gender identity, they conclude that LGBT+ employees are not protected under Title VII.

Those in favor of the LGBT+ ruling counter these arguments with examples of past rulings in which Title VII was interpreted to extend to individuals beyond its original intent. It has been previously used to support cases concerning women with children, sexual harassment, and even same-sex sexual harassment in the workplace. They argue that if Title VII could apply to such cases, why can it not apply to LGBT+ workers, as well?

Stanford Law Professor Pamela Karlan, who argued for the expansion of Title VII to extend to LGBT+ employees, states

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GatorCash continued from page 1

Torres knows that it is something many have been waiting for. "Students have often asked about meal plan programs and parents have inquired if there was a method for purchasing meals or setting aside dollars for their meals while on campus. With the implementation of a new point-of-sale system in our UHD Dining Services, we felt it was the perfect time to implement a new card system with the declining balance option..."

The University has witnessed substantial

growth over the past few years, seeing a rise in enrollment, and adding a brand new College of Sciences and Technology building just north of One Main.

UHD, a commuter-only university, seems to be adding more features in an attempt to evolve a reputation that many students on campus see as irksome.

For some, programs like this are a good start. "That would have helped my time on campus a lot," Patricia Nguyen, a former student at UHD said.

"Anything that makes day-to-day life for students easier is great. I'm glad they have it now."

Torres also stressed that more features of the card such as access to academic and administrative classrooms and event attendance tracking may be introduced in the future. Though at launch, it will serve only as official identification, and act as a way to spend GatorCash, there will surely be much more on this program to come in the future.



The Cafeteria area is one of the busiest spots on campus. With Gator Cash, it may soon become even busier.

Photo by Christopher Charleston

Cantalamessa examines relationship between language, philosophy

By Christopher Charleston

UHD Philosophy Professor Elizabeth Cantalamessa is a bit different from other teachers you might see around campus. She has a specific energy about her that says, "I'm doing this my way."

She loves to reference films in discussions, shows Rick & Morty as part of her lectures, and is currently finishing a graduate program at the University of Miami while teaching at UHD.

Cantalamessa isn't

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quite the quirky, unconventional and cinematically motivated teach-while-standing-on-top-of-a-desk-so-I-can-show-my-students-I'm-one-of-them type of professors you might imagine, though. She's great at what she does.

This past October, Cantalamessa presented research that examines the philosophical use of various words and concepts in different settings.

Referencing what has been coined as Conceptual engineering-- the activity of critically assessing our representational devices for thinking and talking-- Cantalamessa argues that everyday speakers can engage in what she calls linguistic activism.

Cantalamessa says that Conceptual engineering aims to change how others think about or use a term or concept.

"This way we can better understand intentional conceptual change as a group activity that is continuous with everyday linguistic process," she says.

While this might seem difficult to grasp at first, it is better understood when Cantalamessa uses real life examples.

She chooses the age-old debate of whether a hot dog should be consid-

ered a sandwich. This is what Cantalamessa refers to as a conceptual debate, as it does not involve facts, but rather social terms and concepts.

Cantalamessa then asks the question, "Is a racehorse, an athlete?" She quickly insists that the actual debate here is, "Should athletes include non-humans?"

In raising these questions, Cantalamessa highlights how social evolution affects the role of language in our day-to-day discussions and debates.

She furthermore highlights how language can accompany activism when utilized as a tool for social reform, as another interesting point of Cantalamessa's research is a subcategory she refers to as "linguistic intervention."

This is the use of words or concepts intended to intentionally confuse a person in order to make them think.

Cantalamessa shares an example of linguistic intervention -- a young child who states, "I love my moms." Upon first listen, the average person would assume the child made a mistake and meant to say "mom." In reality, it is quite possible the child has two mothers.

SAGA continued from page 1

ensure a safe and supportive environment for members of the LGBT+ community at UHD... There shall be no outward displays of disrespect by any member toward any other member/s of the organization in or outside of a meeting or official organization event."

However, the controversial candidate acted against the values that SAGA supports. Though most of his comments were aimed at a singular member of the group, no members went unaffected.

Diffey explains that, "Many members have reached out to the officers stating that they were uncomfortable around him."

"We're trying to reach the most people that we can," Hernandez states. "If they don't feel safe, what's the point of the group. He made a lot

of people feel uncomfortable."

SAGA member, Briana Canizales, further comments, "SAGA is supposed to be a place where we can be ourselves and be safe." Yet, this candidate's actions disrupted the safe space that SAGA aims to provide its members.

SAGA officers discussed the issue amongst themselves before bringing it to the group's faculty advisor, John Hudson, Ph.D. (Director of UHD's Center for Diversity and Inclusion).

Hudson explained that SAGA was well within their rights to take measures against Saleck's opponent.

The officers reviewed SAGA's constitution to determine which sections were violated by Saleck's opponent. The officers

then attempted to address the issues with the individual with the purpose of suspending him from the group for the remainder of the semester. Saleck's opponent, however, was not welcoming of the feedback.

"We decided to suspend him for the rest of the semester and eliminate him from the current election, but he became verbally aggressive and we didn't feel comfortable with him returning," says Diffey.

When confronted, Saleck's opponent tore up the constitution and proceeded to pass out those torn pieces of the constitution to other members of the group. While doing so, he exclaimed that the group was unfair in their ruling. He claimed that in ejecting him from the group, SAGA officers



Cantalamessa is currently a PhD Candidate at the University of Miami. She received her B.A and M.A in Philosophy from the University of Wyoming
Photo courtesy of Elizabeth Cantalamessa

Once linguistic intervention is understood, it can be manipulated to force individuals into thinking more deeply about an issue.

Each of these examples is an instance in which society has affected the way words and concepts are examined.

One of Cantalamessa's desired points of emphasis in her research is directing

individuals to understand that by realizing linguistic activism, they can change the way in which conversation and debate is processed.

"I want to elucidate or clarify strategies that can enable us to challenge and change dominant, oppressive and unjust narratives," she explains.

Though her research is constantly progressing,

what Cantalamessa hopes for is clear.

"I think conceptual engineering has and always will be a relevant and worthwhile endeavor, and linguistic activism is a way in which we can challenge existing social practices and participate in those processes of change."



Photo Courtesy of Carmen Hernandez

favoring other members' opinions over his own. This opponent was then disqualified from the running and ejected from the group entirely.

This ruling caused a divide amongst the group, as some members sided with Saleck's opponent. But SAGA officers stand

by their decision.

Newly elected Vice President Saleck explained why, "This is a safe space. People throw around the term 'safe space' so much, but they don't realize what it takes to maintain a safe space... We don't want to inhibit people who have differ-

ent opinions from us. We want to allow that to flourish, but we want to make sure it's not at the cost of the safety of other members of the group."

SAGA is always open to new members and meets every Wednesday at 3:30 in A613.

“Ganja & Hess” emphasized the definition of horror movies

By Blanca Guadiana

This year the film chosen for UHD's Annual Outdoor Halloween Film Screening was “Ganja & Hess,” an avant-garde horror film made in 1973 by director Bill Gunn. The film features a mostly African American cast and was made by an entirely African American crew. Despite the recent popularity of African American led horror films continues to be unusual, Chuck Jackson Ph. D. chose to screen “Ganja & Hess” this year because of the unusual qualities of the film. He states that his decision was due to the recent success of Jordan Peele's “Get Out” and “Us”.

Jackson commented “Students in my ENG 2305: American Horror Stories classes have been raising questions about the historical relationship between African Americans and cinematic horror, and this film forms part of the answer.”

Jackson goes on to say that another reason he chose this film was its obscurity. Although his students wanted to know about the history of African Americans and horror films, the majority of them had never heard of “Ganja & Hess” or understood its relevance to that history.

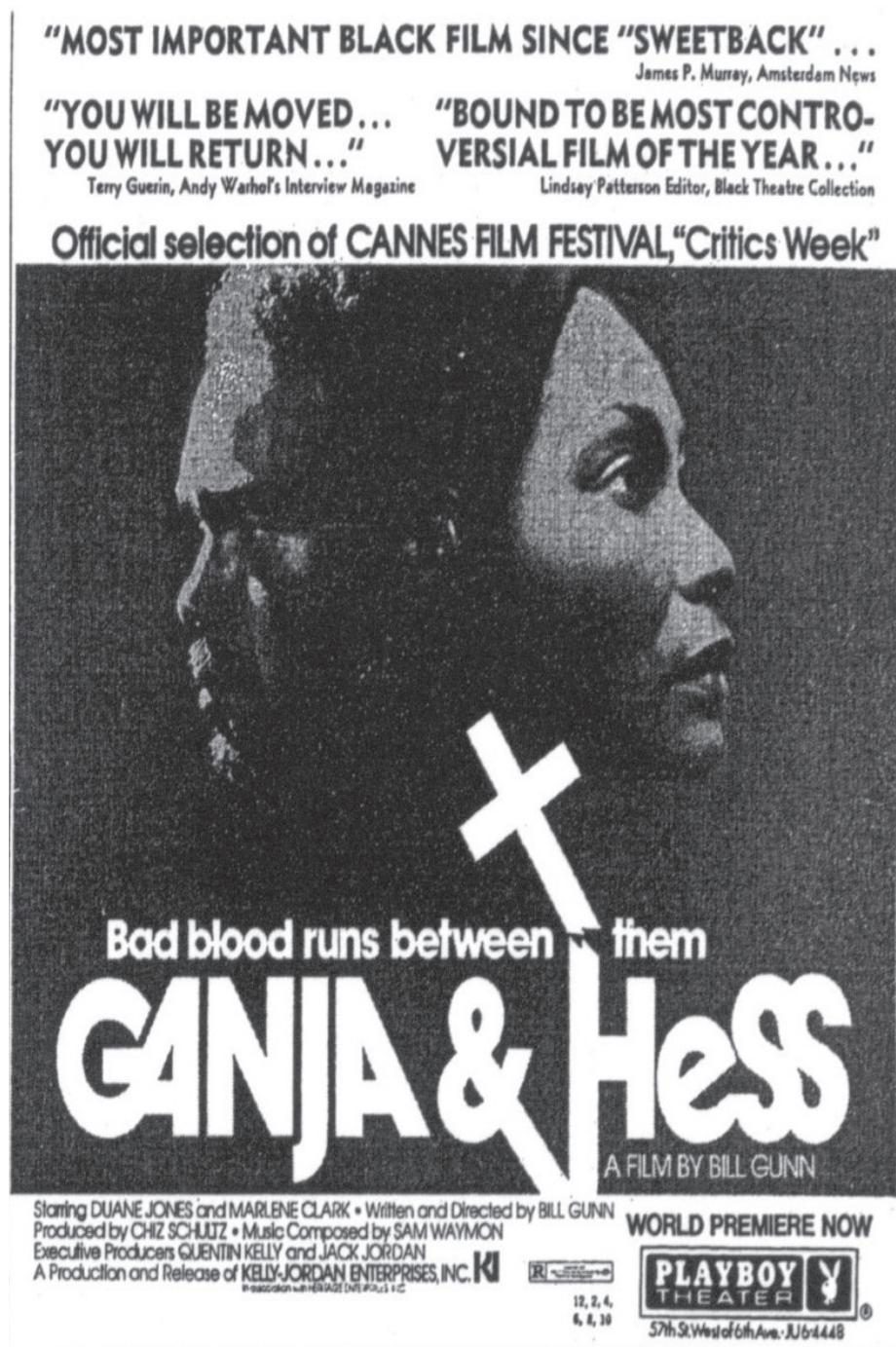
“Ganja & Hess” is an interesting film, with a slow paced plot designed to make the audience feel more and more uncomfortable. The film tells the story of a wealthy anthropologist who becomes a vampire and falls in love with a woman who discovers his secret who he eventually turns into a vampire as well. The main characters, Ganja Meda (Marlene Clark) and Dr. Hess Green (Duane Jones), are well written and their actions are relatable, grounding the character focused plot. But the way their story is presented is slow and uncomfortable. The film does not shy away from Ganja and Hess having intercourse with each other and their victims, as well as those victim's gruesome deaths. There are scenes of Ganja hallucinating about one of her victims after she has killed him as well as her dreaming about Hess killing her before he turns her into a vampire. Throughout it all narrative is intercut with scenes of African tribespeople walking in a field for no discernable reason besides, perhaps to remind the viewer that Hess was turned into a vampire with an ancient African knife.

The film creeps along from the start using dis-

jointed scenes to unsettle the audience. Even when the story starts in earnest there are many odd camera angles that are usually used in moderation in more conventional horror films. Low angles are used when more conventional films would have the camera at eye height, shots are centered just behind the characters heads. Even close-ups, which are more common, are too close. They serve to give the audience a feeling that something about the film is off. Scenes where an unsettling chant is used as background music becomes louder and louder until it overwhelms all the diegetic noise in the scene.

“Ganja & Hess” is a draining story to watch and definitely not a film to watch for fun. However it is an interesting look into film history for those who may be interested.

As Jackson says “The horror conjured in this film – written, directed, shot, and performed by African Americans – represents a turn away from narrative toward the surreal, offering students a challenging, but important object lesson for understanding the relationship between horror, surrealism, and alternative cultures.”



Movie poster of “Ganja and Hess” from 1973
Photo Courtesy Of Spectacular Attractions

AvantGarden brings out weekly talent on Westheimer

By Jaida Doll

AvantGarden is a bar and venue that hosts a variety of events from private parties to acoustic open mics and stand-up comedy routines. Only a nine-minute drive from the UHD campus, the highlight of the bar's entertainment is their weekly poetry slams.

Hidden behind a group of trees, AvantGarden is a hidden gem of Houston Midtown. It sits on the corner of Westheimer St. and Taft St. Nestled in the busy streets of downtown, the trees obscure the venue from the bustling city, which despite its bright yellow color, makes the quaint Bavarian house is difficult to spot.

AvantGarden hosts Write About Now (WAN) every Wednesday night, from 7:30 pm to 10:30

pm, though late starts are customary. Writers are invited to share their poetry and spoken word pieces with the crowd that gathers on the patio each week.

WAN packs out the back patio every week. Though a popular spot, the venue features two bars – one inside and one outside – to accommodate its guests. The front garden also serves as a pleasant escape from the overwhelm of guests.

Though most WAN events are open to all writers, they also host Identity Nights which focuses on a particular minority who is invited to share their personal struggles and experiences. Previous Identity Nights have focused on racial and religious minorities as well as women and LGBT individuals.

UHD student, Fatima Saleck, presented her work during the June-teenth Identity Night. She shares her experience with WAN.

“I really appreciate WAN. It helped my confidence when it comes to performance because the whole platform is centered around loving and accepting unconditionally, and they do an amazing job of maintain the space for creatives.”

Whether one plans to step outside the comfort zone and present personal writings, like Fatima Saleck, or simply listen to the presentation of others' works, WAN at AvantGarden is an entertaining and enriching way to spend a Wednesday night, especially for a cover charge of only \$5. For just five more dollars, visitors can grab some outstanding



Photo Courtesy of Fatima Saleck

tacos from the taco truck, Taqueria El Palomo, that sits in the parking lot.

AvantGarden is located at 411 Westheimer Rd. in Houston. The bar has an active events cal-

endar including acoustic open mic nights, comedy nights, live performances, and more. There is almost always live music inside the bar, even when other events are occurring on

the outside patio. The venue is also available for rent for private parties and events.

For more information, check out the website: avantgardenhouston.com.

Zombieland: Double Tap – Ten years of Travel

By Varah Thornton

“Zombieland: Double Tap” finds our group 5 years into the apocalypse with new survivors, new tensions and new threats.

Our main cast of characters features Tallahassee, Columbus, Wichita and Little Rock arriving at the White House in search of a new home. Our crew has aged and has their plan of attack down, including new names for the types of zombies they come across. We’ve given a generous introduction by an explanatory narrative from Columbus that catches us up to everything that happened over the past five years and where the group’s dynamic currently sits.

What appeared to be a rollicking commentary on current topics from the trailer is revealed to be a film focused more on the interrelation between the need for survival and the people they choose to protect.

Each character, new and familiar, brings a new complication to the film’s ultimate storyline of finding their runaway group member. The film touches on topics of love, paternalism and needing connection outside of chosen family. All our characters navigate the murky waters of love as the introduction of new characters and threats push them to edge of their tolerance levels for solidarity.

“Double Tap” keeps up the slow frenetic pace of the first film by giving a solid foundation on where our characters are and introducing the new cast of Nevada, Madison and Berkeley organically alongside new locations. The zombies are harder to kill and nearly impossible to outrun this time around, but nowhere near as much of a threat as the pressure to keep things exclusive between the groups.

It is also a film where our characters are highly aware of themselves,

Columbus’s “Rules” coming into competition when a set of doppel-gangers show up on their doorstep and drive Wichita over the edge in stop on their journey.

Though the film itself is a good romp full of plenty of gore and dark humor, most of the talk around the film was the production itself.

The initial film was released in late 2009 and quickly became a cult hit among college students in 2010. It was expected that there would be a sequel. But as the years passed, it became more and more unlikely as the cast experienced their own personal successes and the rise of zombies in popular culture. During the press tour, the cast has repeatedly stressed that they were always open to filming a sequel, but that timing was always off, or the script was not to par with the first film.

Star Woody Harrelson (Tallahassee) spoke on



From left: Jesse Eisenberg, Woody Harrelson, Zoey Deutch and Emma Stone
Photo courtesy of IMDb

WTF with Marc Maron about how the cast wanted to work with original writers Dave Callahan, Rhett Reese and Paul Wernick to make sure things were just right. Reese and Wernick immediately followed up Zombieland’s initial success with Deadpool and Deadpool 2, Callahan penning the 2014 Godzilla revival and currently working on

Wonder Woman sequel. Harrelson stated that he and the rest of the cast were very happy for all their success but felt that Double Tap would not flow right without the original writers. Jesse Eisenberg (Columbus) and Emma Stone (Wichita) made similar comments on late night shows.

Though the plot sometimes seemed to

meander, and the new characters are slightly two-dimensional, it is a fun update to the franchise that leaves room for a possible third outing.

And for those who were hoping for a follow up to the notable Bill Murray cameo in the first film, I suggest waiting a few minutes after the initial credits begin for a sweet treat.

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Merry Fudgin' Christmas
Art by Kelsi Rios

Downtown Dollar: So, you want to start a business while attending school? Do it.

By Christopher Charleston

Amongst my small group of college friends are definitely a few peculiar (in a good way) characters. I've got artist friends and athlete friends. I know a few writers and a few dancers. I know people at UHD who paint, and some who design clothes. But when I really think about my friends who are currently in college, I notice something very interesting. Many of them own and operate their own businesses and brands while going to school either part, or full-time. Subconsciously, it's probably one of the reasons I started this column.

Starting and owning a business in college is not easy. But it's definitely something that can be done. If you have an idea that you're willing to nurture into a full-blown company, I encourage you to get it going. It's never too early to discover your inner entrepreneur. Here are a few tips to do just that.

If you're looking to start a business, start one that has to do with what you're passionate about. Growing a company takes time. In order to put in the hours it requires for a business to grow, you have to want to do the work. If you don't, it'll feel like a chore, and odds are, you'll end up quitting after the first few weeks.

If you like writing, start a blog and think of ways to monetize it. If you enjoy cooking, build a company centered around food. If you're someone who's good at advice, there are thousands of online consulting companies that give dating, business and general life advice. Turn your passion into a business, because who says business can't be fun?

Next, cater your business to those who you're already around. The biggest excuse I hear when it comes to college students not starting their dream business is, "I'm always on campus." or "I'm always doing school-work." Which is an understandable excuse, because

it shows you're committed to your studies, and that should always come first. But that doesn't mean you can't capitalize on your current situation.

If you're always around other college students, ask yourself, "What do college students need? What do they like?" Apply this thought process to your current situation. The answer might just be the foundation to your new company.

Furthermore, don't worry about making money at first. I know, I know. Boring right? Well it's true, and the best approach. Focus on growing your business and having fun. Build your brand and connect with new people. If you're in school, take pride in knowing that you're on your way to gaining a degree, and your current business is a tool to network and grow knowledge of your particular craft. The money will come, but don't stress over it. There are many businesses you can start without a ton of capital, so recouping your investment should never



be something that worries you. Start small, treat it like a side-hobby, and let it grow naturally.

Finally, just do it. There's a reason Nike has made a gazillion dollars saying just that. The best way to start a business is to simply start a business.

Register your company at a local clerk's office for under \$20 by purchasing a DBA

(Doing Business As) form. Squarespace.com and Shopify are one-stop-shops for creating online companies. Utilize them!

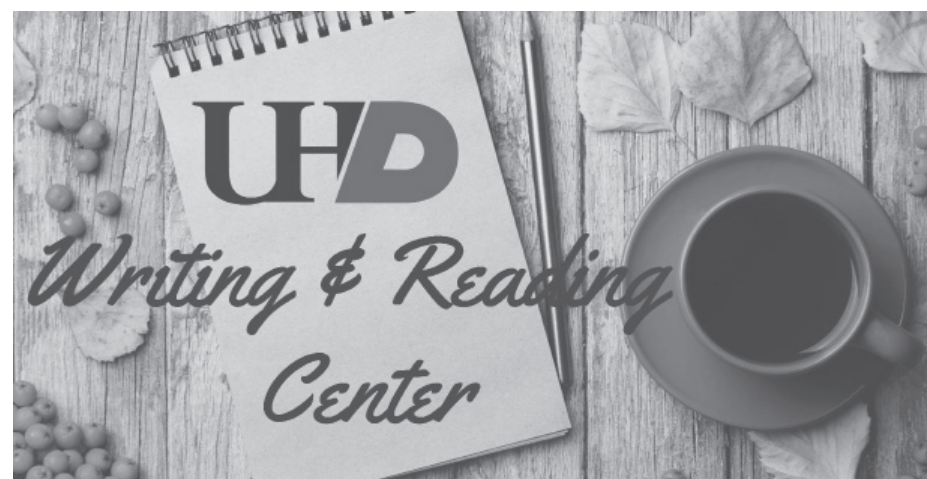
It sounds cliché, but with a single laptop, smartphone or tablet, you can truly start and run a business from anywhere.

I think sometimes we overlook the simplicity of connecting with people from anywhere in the

world because it's become somewhat of the norm for us.

Remember, try your best to balance your time and prioritize what's most important to you. Your youth is the best time to fail, so don't be afraid to get out there and swing the business bat!

Who knows? You might just hit a home run.



Fall 2019 Hours

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The Dateline

Spring 2020

The University of Houston-Downtown's student newspaper

Vol 64

The Dateline is UHD's student newspaper and has been Student Run Since Volume One. Working on the newspaper is great way to be active on campus while building up a resume.

All current UHD students are eligible to work for The Dateline. Experience is preferred but not required. We will train new writers.

For more information contact the editors:

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The Pumpkin Spice of it all

By Varah Thornton

No longer are the seasons heralded by the changing of the leaves or a chill in the air. Instead, they are declared by the arrival of flavored seasonal drinks. With the unpredictable ravages of climate change, this may be the new normal.

The flavors are all too familiar: pumpkin spice, gingerbread, peppermint. Once they arrive on the menu of cafes and fast food restaurants, we all agree that a new season has come. This goes for all seasons and holidays. But should we be relying on such arbitrary denotations?

In the south, warm winters are a familiar mainstay. Cold is anything below 60 degrees, and holiday decorations featuring sunglasses and flip

flops are the norm. As the years have passed, those “winters” have become warmer and warmer to the point where recognizing the seasonal change is non-distinguishable from store floor plan changes or the date itself.

The most familiar of these new seasonal markers is the appearance of the Pumpkin Spice Latte (PSL) on Starbucks’ menu. It is now routinely celebrated online as the official start of the fall season. There is, in fact, an official start of fall on September 22, also known as the Autumnal Equinox. The PSL hit stores on August 27. The previous year it was August 28 and in 2017 it arrived on September 5.

Another holiday marker also recognized is the arrival of “the

red cups”. This is when Starbucks switches from their typical white logo cups to more seasonal red ones. Though dubbed “the red cups”, the collection now includes a series of holiday themed cups in triplicates with various decorations. This year, the company gave away free reusable red cups with the purchase of one of their designated “holiday” drinks which arrived on the menu the same day.

The red cups typically denote the arrival of the Christmas season. Their arrival date? November 5. Thanksgiving had no chance.

Starbucks may be the most well-known to do such, but they’re not the only company who follows suit. Dunkin’ Donuts, Oreos and even local favorite Shipley’s get in



Photo Courtesy of Dunkin’ Donuts

on the cooperate holiday changes. Customers can find various items from peppermint flavored ice cream to pumpkin spice flavored Equal packets (yes, those are real).

Though these can easily be written off as companies taking advantage of

the holiday changes, it can be argued that for many, it is the only way to know that the seasons have changed. Here in Houston, temperatures casually go from mid-30s to the high 70s in the span of a few hours. If you have a busy schedule that is not dic-

tated by a date but by the frequency of your working hours, seeing menu markers such as this give you an easy orientation of what time of year it may be, especially when the weather does no favors in determining what it wants to be for the day.

The city’s best pho is on 2929 Milam

By Christopher Charleston

I have a theory. Pho has become a national millennial past time. What ramen was for our parents, pho is for us. Sure, it costs a heck of a lot more, but I challenge you to find one college soul who claims it isn’t worth it.

Finding new pho spots is like a really cool new app that you can play in real life. (Pokemon-Pho, anyone?)

I’ve mastered this game. At the very least, I’m a city-wide champion. I’ve turned Houston into my very own pho playground. So much so, that the Wells Fargo officials who organize my monthly statements are surely concerned.

But what makes tasting this traditional Vietnamese dish so special is the experience, and the ability to share that experience with your friends. The best place to do just that, is right here in Houston, Texas on 2929 Milam Street, at a little place called Simply Pho.

The atmosphere is what first catches your attention when walking into Simply Pho. While it still has a traditional feel to it, the entire space is modernized at the same



Simply Pho sits in a strip center in the middle of Downtown Houston. A hidden gem.

Photo by Christopher Charleston

time. The music playing throughout the restaurant shifts from Taylor Swift, to Rihanna, to Kendrick Lamar, to Charlie Puth. Basketball and MTV play on separate televisions. Soft lighting relaxes your eyes. Quite frankly, they’ve really mastered a vibe in this place.

Next, their perfect-sized menu is something I feel can’t be overlooked. It’s not a small selection, but it’s also not 15 pages of different variations of the same things that could confuse someone who’s just looking for a nice meal. They have meat and vegetarian options, and both are delicious.

The wait staff is phenomenal. Like Jay-Z writing a verse, they never use pens. They’re familiarity with the menu is impressive, and I often find myself ordering more just to see if they can actually keep up. (Yeah. That’s why.)

Finally, the food is just incredible. It’s always brought out in a timely manner, fresh, and perfectly cooked. On Tuesdays, they offer free Vietnamese iced coffee. Take advantage.

Dine in for a wonderful experience, or order to-go and enjoy at home.

Either way, you won’t be disappointed in Simply Pho.

By Aansa Usmani

In college, it is normal to have some type of stress, whether it be academic, financial or other internal struggles. Yet, it is important to know how you can best take care of yourself. It can be challenging to take a moment to care for oneself or to “breathe” (in figurative terms, not literal) as the semester continues to pile on due date after the due date. However, stress should not rise to a deathly level.

Last month was literal hell. Never before has my stress physically affected me. Anytime I began to feel better, another wave of sickness abounded causing me to fall further behind on assignments. It escalated to such a degree in which my anxiety arose anytime I opened my laptop; the amount of past-due assignments was nerve-racking, yet this was not a mere consequence of procrastination.

After visiting the emergency room for an appendicitis scare, it dawned on me how stress can negatively impact a person’s health. Stress can cause more than just mental anguish; it can affect one’s physical health, as my example attests to

such consequences. Since then, I have learned the importance of moderation, focusing on “one thing at a time,” rather than multiple ‘miniature’ assignments at once. In doing so, it has helped me alleviate stress, allowing me to concentrate on more urgent tasks, rather than those due months from now.

Although college can be a challenging time in a student’s life, it should not be characterized as stressful or anxiety-inducing, as there is more to college than academics. Joining a club or two can help alleviate stress, as becoming a part of a community can help you gain supportive life-long friends and mentors.

There are academic support groups throughout campus that are designed to help students overcome difficulties within a class, such as The Writing Center, the Math Lab, and Gator Success. Counseling services are also available on campus, which provide students with the opportunity to talk to a mental health professional about issues that impact their day-to-day lives.

My example should serve as a reminder on how to not overwhelm

yourself with work; heed my advice and take things “one day at a time” without forgetting to take time for yourself. College should not be remembered as a stressful period in your life; it should be recalled as a time where you gained life-long friends and experiences that will shape your character and eventual career.

Although this may seem like the typical de-stress piece, it is important to take care of yourself. Stress should be dealt with in both a proactive and efficient manner so you will be prepared to overcome any arising issue. Links to these services down here below:

Center for Math and Stats Support:

<https://www.uhd.edu/academics/university-college/mss/Pages/default.aspx>

Student Counseling Center:

<https://www.uhd.edu/student-life/counseling/Pages/default.aspx>

The Writing Center:

<https://www.uhd.edu/academics/university-college/writing-center/Pages/writing-center-index.aspx>

UHD Basketball: Your 2035 Conference Champions

By Christopher Charleston

Imagine this. The year is 2035. Flying cars (finally) exist, the Pop-eye's chicken sandwich craze has started to die down, and President Ocasio-Cortez is in the middle of her bid for re-election. And one more thing, The University of Houston - Downtown's basketball team is good. Like, really good.

Not only that, but head coach Mike D'Antoni, formerly of the Houston Rockets, has just signed a five-year extension to coach the team through the 2041-2042 season. The move comes only 8 months after The Big 12 conference announced UHD as its newest member.

Several blue chip prospects have committed to the university in recent weeks, including a 5-star recruit from Houston's own, Jack Yates High School.

The Gators of UHD entered their final season in the Southland Conference as the favorites to win it all, before departing for The Big 12.

On March 14th, 2035, it happens. An 85-62 victory over Central Arkansas results in UHD cutting down the nets inside the Toyota Center.

Basketball Hall of

Famers James Harden and Russell Westbrook watch from the sidelines.

Now step with me back into 2019. Yes, the year where UHD has no NCAA eligible men's basketball team, and no sports programs who compete in D1, 2 or 3 conferences. What you (and UHD officials) may not realize at this moment, however, is that in 2019, the potential for everything I just said to become reality, is alive and well.

On February 3rd, 2010, The University of Texas at San Antonio football program announced the signing of their inaugural class. It wasn't breaking news or anything, just a lesser known university in the state of Texas announcing an expansion of their athletics department.

Though starting a sports program at any university is surely difficult, UTSA had a few advantages at their disposal. Namely, location, and an already built stadium -- The Alamodome -- ready for their use.

UTSA officials realized back then, that when it comes to recruiting, most teenage athletes want to get away from home, but that doesn't necessarily mean that they want to be a full 12-hour drive away from their

family and friends.

By offering a football program in San Antonio, UTSA knew that they would be able to heavily recruit Houston, Dallas, and Austin, essentially offering an alternative to athletes who might not be good enough to earn a full ride at UT, Texas A&M or Baylor, but feel they are still deserving of a scholarship *somewhere*.

Choosing UTSA ensured these athletes the ability to play close to home (on scholarship) and not have to walk-on at a smaller university, or play in a freezing ghost land in the middle of nowhere in order to get their schooling paid for.

Officials at UTSA saw an opportunity, and seized it.

Present day, UTSA football is no powerhouse, but week in and week out, they compete. Furthermore, the addition of a major sports program has given their alumni yet another reason to return to campus and support their alma mater.

UHD has a similar opportunity upon them. They can provide an alternative to the University of Houston-- who has recently made a name for itself as a major D1 sports powerhouse -- and other Texas universities like TSU, Prairie View A&M



The basketball court inside the UHD student center is currently only used for recreational and club team purposes.

Photo by Christopher Charleston & Rice.

Recruiting in college sports is a lot like real estate. Location is everything. It's the reason the University of Southern California has done so well in that department, and the reason that Idaho hasn't been to many major bowl games.

Sorry, Idaho, but few athletes want to play in small markets if they don't have to. By 2030, Houston will be the third largest city in the United States, eclipsing Chicago. While that's terrible for I-10, it shows the growth needed to support universities like UHD in their

efforts to expand.

If UHD began to lay the groundwork right now for a true athletic department, in the next 10 to 15 years, they could compete on a high level.

Like UTSA, they are in the perfect spot for recruiting, and if they could somehow work out an agreement to play in a venue such as Toyota Center or Reliant Arena, it would make the university all the more of an attractive recruiting destination.

Who would have ever thought that small universities like Gonzaga, Butler and Marquette would be able to build respectable

basketball programs?

Programs that are in the running to win it all every single year.

It only takes one special recruit to put you in a position to compete. It only takes one respected head coach. UTSA did it, and UHD can do the same.

It'll take resources, energy, time and a lot of money to start a basketball program. But in the end, it'll be worth it.

If school officials truly have a desire to expand, maybe -- just maybe -- by 2035, we may never look at UHD the same.

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