

DATELINE

The University of Houston-Downtown

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Crowd celebrates 'sigh of relief and normalcy' at Bayou Bash

BY AMY NGUYEN

This year's Bayou Bash drew in lines of people ready to enjoy free crawfish, live music and gifts and activities at the spare-no-expense party organized by Student Activities at the South Deck on March 31.

"It was fun, and it offered a sigh of relief and normalcy," said Student Activities Assistant Director Trenshae Gilbert.

BASH continued on page 2

UHD professors narrate Russia-Ukraine conflict

BY ANITA GOOLCHARAN

As the Russia Ukraine war unfolds, many are left with questions about the war and its origins.

Nancy Lopez, lecturer of Russian History, Alexander Bielakowski, lecturer of military history, and Aaron Gillette, lecturer of European history, explained the war from various perspectives.

On March 30, the Department of History, Humanities & Languages hosted a discussion panel to

discuss how the Russo-Ukrainian War can pose a threat to world peace. Lopez opened the presentation with a brief history of Russia, highlighting Russia's expansionist and Russification, the forced assimilation history.

Lopez analyzed a quote made by Russian President Vladimir Putin during an address.

"So, I will start with the fact that modern Ukraine was entirely created by Russia or, to be more precise, by Bolshevik, Com-

munist Russia," Putin said. "This process started practically right after the 1917 revolution, and Lenin and his associates did it in a way that was extremely harsh on Russia – by separating, severing what is historically Russian land. Nobody asked the millions of people living there what they thought."

Lopez debunked this claim as she detailed the empires which ruled Ukraine.

CONFLICT continued on page 2



From left: Russian History Lecturer Nancy Lopez, European History Lecturer Aaron Gillette, Military History Lecturer Alexander Bielakowski, and Assistant Professor Jonathan Chism. Credit: Anita Goolcharan



UHD cheerleading team and mascot volunteer pose in front of the finish line at the event. Runners participate in the marathon on April 3. Courtesy: Art Car IPA 4K's Facebook page.



UHD co-hosts Art Car IPA 5K marathon

BY AMY NGUYEN

UHD partnered with Saint Arnold's Brewery to host the annual Art Car IPA 5K on April 3.

The social run is inspired by hand-painted art cars designed for the brewery to show the art of running.

The race opened at 7 a.m. then kicked off

at 8:30 a.m. Among the 2,800 runners were the UHD Gatorettes, cheerleaders, over 100 guests, UHD volunteers, and alumni at the event.

The race ended at 11 a.m. The 3.1-mile route started from Saint Arnold's Brewery to ending at EaDo.

RUN continued on page 2

City's largest cycling tour returns after 2-year break

BY EDWARD SAENZ

Cyclists from across Texas kicked off from city hall for the 15th annual Tour de Houston, which returned after a two-year hiatus due to COVID-19.

"The annual bike ride is a Houston tradition," Mayor Sylvester Turner said about the event.

TOUR DE HOUSTON continued on page 6



Cyclists await at the start line for Tour De Houston to commence on April 3. Credit: Edward Saenz



Credit: G. O.

Garden escapes

7



Credit: G. O.

Eco-friendly tips

11



Daddy Yankee

12

INSIDE THIS EDITION

- Gator Life.....2
- News.....5
- Arts & Entertainment.....7
- Sports & Gaming.....10
- Opinions.....11



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CONFLICT

continued from page 1

Kievan Rus was a loose federation in Northern and Eastern Europe from the ninth to 13th century.

Ukraine was the center of the federation, but it was lost to the Mongols for 500 years after the Mongols invaded Kievan Rus. The territory was reunified under the rule of Catherine the Great nearly 250 years ago.

Lopez discussed how the Russian oligarchy treated Ukrainians and other ethnicities inconsistently.

Under Alexander III, Russification was heavily enforced. After the Russian Civil War in 1917 the Bolsheviks declared that any republic had the right to secede before the soviet state formed.

Further detailing the inconsistency of the remarks made by Putin, Lopez stated that Lenin was somewhat supportive of the ethnic

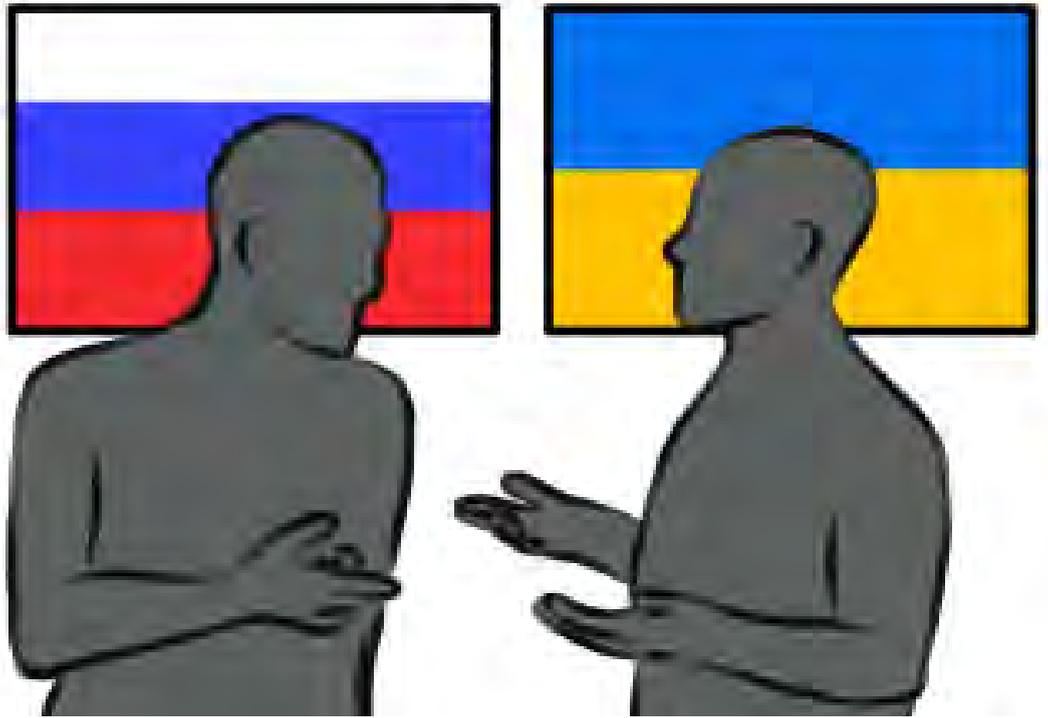
minorities in the Soviet Union, but Stalin reversed any progress of unification with the man-made famine on Ukrainians known as the Holodomor.

Bielakowski discussed past military strategies of Russia. He detailed the events of the Winter War, which occurred from November of 1939 to March of 1940 and involved the Soviets and Fins.

“The current Russia-Ukraine conflict shares a lot of links to the Soviet-Finnish War,” Bielakowski stated. “I would argue if you wanted a historical event to compare the current situation this would be it.”

Bielakowski argued the events of the Winter War are similar because of the military strategies used. There are also other similar elements such as the brutal invasion of a weaker country, faulty Russian intelligence, and low morale.

The Winter War was fought to a standstill despite the Fins being outnumbered and having less weaponry



Credit: Giselle Oviedo

than the Russians. Another major similarity in the war is the importance of outside assistance and influence.

In the Winter War the League of Nations condemned the actions of the Soviet invasion, this parallels the current situation.

The final speaker of the event, Professor Gillette gave an analysis of the Russian perspective. Gillette pref-

aced his presentation with a disclaimer that he does not condone the actions of the Russian government.

“The world has changed dramatically, radically even,” Gillette said. “We are going to be more internationally focused... if you know what your adversary is thinking you can solve the problem.”

Much of his presentation analyzed quotes from

Russian media outlets and opinions.

One perspective shared was an excerpt that claimed the Russian government is attempting to save Ukraine and liberate the country from western power.

Gillette ended his presentation stating: “Many people wanted Ukraine to be a part of Russia, but they were never asked.”



Students make metal engravings on the South Deck at the Bayou Bash on March 31. Credit. Amy Nguyen



Crowd dances to live music on the South Deck at the Bayou Bash on March 31. Credit. Amy Nguyen

BASH

continued from page 1

Last year’s Bayou Bash took place as a drive-thru format on Girard Street due to COVID-19, and 2020’s celebration was canceled completely.

Student Activities prepared tables with a crawfish pattern cover, fishing nets, and a bucket for attendees to sit and enjoy the meal of crawfish, potatoes, sausage, and corn along with soft drinks and water.

The crowd danced to party songs such as the “Cha Cha Slide” and more as the Platinum Players Zydeco Band and a live DJ performed at the event.

As students and families gathered around for a fun time, several items and activities were given for free.

A grey t-shirt that displayed the event’s name “Bayou Bash 2022” on the front and a cartoon smiling crawfish in a pot on the back and a souvenir cup with the event title. However, there were limited supplies and tickets, so some were not

able to verify entry nor receive souvenirs as more were unavailable.

Saint Arnold Brewing Company provided a candle-making station that offered glass cups and candle wax. The wax came in five colors: brown, red, blue, white, and orange.

After pouring wax into the glass came the finishing touches: the bartender placing the wick then melting wax by using a blowtorch for a few seconds and viola: a container candle.

Other stations enabled attendees to get creative

with making bracelets, letter stamping, and metal engraving. A much-needed digital keepsake

The 360Photobooth was a favorite among photo lovers. Those who wanted the much-needed digital keepsake nowadays stood still on an elevated platform as the photographer spun the arm that captured a slow-motion video.

This event was available for free to students and for \$10 to non-students.

RUN

continued from page 1

Runners ran from Lyons Avenue to Franklin Street in East Downtown, where they turned around to head back to Lyons Avenue.

They received a commemorative shirt, pint glass, and a medal with Back to the Future style art on it. ABC13 reporter and UHD Manager of Student News Raven Ambers won first place in the 5K with a finisher medal and a pint glass.

“It was a beautiful day outside and there were a lot of hills,” Ambers said. “The race was nice and exciting as it gave a challenge through an interesting route with roads.”

The event was supported by volunteers and police at rest stops. At the end, runners and guests were treated to a post-race party that included food, drinks, and live music by Texas Tamale Company, Saint Arnold’s, and rock cover band Treble Hook.

UHD K-pop Club facilitates learning of Korean language on campus

BY ASTI PHEA

UHD's K-pop social club is now adding a traditional Korean culture activity by studying the Korean language this month.

K-pop Club Vice-President Madison Moore is looking forward to the recent changes.

"We're becoming a well-rounded club," Moore said. "We are learning the language and the culture from multiple aspects, not just K-pop our club is not just strictly one thing."

The lessons will focus on teaching Hangul, which is the Korean alphabet, a writing system for the Korean language first created in 1443 by King Sejong the Great.

This is a fantastic way for students to take advantage of Korean language learning in

a fun, relaxed environment on campus since UHD does not officially offer Korean as a foreign language course. Hangul lessons begin this semester and will continue throughout the 2022-2023 academic year.

The K-pop Club will continue to learn dance choreography to popular Korean songs, but dancing is not required to join or attend meetings.

This semester, the club will also host field trips to K-pop related activities.

"We will definitely attend more events, such as K-Pop themed roller-skating nights and cup-sleeve events at cafes which celebrate birthdays of K-Pop artists," Moore added.

The K-pop Club meets in the Jesse H. Jones Student Life Center in the multipur-

pose studio on the third floor, Fridays from 4-6 p.m.

Students interested in Korean culture are invited to the meetings to see what the social club is all about.

Anyone interested can attend meetings even people who are not currently enrolled at UHD. However, only students enrolled in a class at UHD are eligible to join as a member.

The members have a chat group on Discord to stay connected and share information between meetings.

The club welcomes suggestions from students and staff on any activities or events related to the Korean language or culture that may serve the UHD community.

For more information, please contact UHD's K-pop Club president Asti Phea: pleara2@gator.uhd.edu

THE DATELINE

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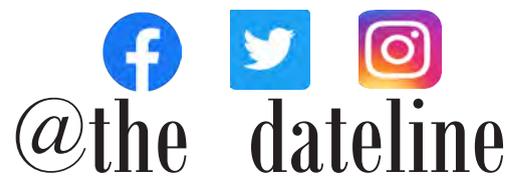
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The Dateline reserves the right to edit or modify submissions for the sake of clarity, content, grammar, or space limitations. All submissions become property of The Dateline and may not be returned. All paid writers must be currently enrolled students at UHD. All paid writers must also complete vendor registration with the University of Houston System prior to contributing. Press releases, story ideas, news tips and suggestions are always welcomed. We encourage all students to contribute.

Always hiring!

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No experience required



Credit: Shaheryar Khan

케이팝 클럽

K-Pop Club Meetings:

- Jesse H. Jones Student Life Center
- Multipurpose Studio, Third Floor
- Fridays, 4-6 p.m.

우리와 함께

For more information, please contact UHD's K-pop Club president Asti Phea: pleara2@gator.uhd.edu



Credit: Jordynn Godfrey

Spring 2022

72ND COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY

First Ceremony 12:30 p.m.
Colleges Represented:

- ▶ College of Humanities and Social Sciences
- ▶ College of Sciences and Technologies
- ▶ College of Public Service

Second Ceremony 4:00 p.m.
Colleges Represented:

- ▶ Marilyn Davies College of Business
- ▶ University College

Orientation
Tuesday, April 26

- Pick up cap & gown
- Learn diploma & commencement details
- Visit your college to learn about Honor Cords

Law enforcement workers present sexual assault facts

BY ANITA GOOLCHARAN

April is sexual assault awareness month and UHD invited professionals in law enforcement to educate and inform the campus community on the resources available.

UHDPD Chief Casey Davis, the first presenter, shared more facts about sexual assault, including that women are predominantly the victims of sexual assault. However, anyone can potentially fall victim to the crime. Sexual assault in Harris County in 2021 increased by 19%, and it is estimated that 91% of sexual assaults go unreported.

“If you are a victim of sexual assault, it’s not your fault,” he reminded the audience. “We are not here to pass judgement. We are here to protect you...we are not here to embarrass, shame or blame, only protect.”

Davis offered safety measures such as following a gut feeling when feeling uncomfortable in situations, sticking with a group, and remaining vigilant.

The chief also detailed the reporting process and the importance of medical attention following a sexual

assault. It is a victim’s choice to report the crime, but Davis advocates for all victims to seek medical attention and counseling following an assault.

Following an assault, a victim can choose to undergo a sexual assault forensic exam where evidence can be collected. This evidence can be stored for up to five years and used in a police investigation.

Students who feel unsafe walking to their vehicles are welcome to request UHDPD officers to escort them. To use the service, visit N118, or notify the police dispatcher via any police call box or call 713-221-8065.

UHDPD is also currently working with IT to upgrade the camera system and to install cameras that will capture the license plates of vehicles that enter and exit the parking garage and student parking lots.

Student Health Services representative Kristil Rave-nell explained the services offered to students at a discounted rate.

These services include but are not limited to preventative medical services, general physicals, wellness exams, birth control con-

sults, STD testing, diagnosis and treatment of infections, diagnosis and treatment of minor injuries, and laboratory testing.

The last presenters, Texas Forensic Nurse Examiner Brookley Torres and Sexual Assault Victims Advocate Vanesa Plascencia are associates of the Forensic Center of Excellence.

The Forensic Center of Excellence is a trauma center for victims of violence and is certified in the medical forensic exam’s evidence collection and storage protocols.

The demand for forensic exams is at its peak with the population of patients including sexual assault, domestic violence, human trafficking, child maltreatment, and elder abuse victims.

“There is often a misconception that all emergency rooms, or 24/7 clinics and hospitals and things like that offer forensic exams which is not always the case,” Torres said.

Plascencia detailed the job of an advocate, which includes supporting the survivor and reminding the

survivor of certain resources. Victims can request an advocate at any time during an exam.

The center offers a hotline to consult with victims. Their number is 281-306-6893.

Resources for victims of sexual assault include the National Sexual Assault Hotline 800- 656-HOPE, The Montrose Center, The Bridge Over Troubled Waters, and ADVA.

For more information on sexual violence, NSVRC.org.

Dean of Student's Office hosts sexual assault seminars

April 14

What part of NO do you Not understand

April 19

Active Minds: General Mental Health and Resources

April 27

Denim Day

April 28

Crown x Glory: 'What Happens in this House, Stays in this House

Credit: Edward Saenz

Scholar embraces protests as vehicles for positive social change

BY TAYLAR STOWERS

Associate Professor Jennifer Cobbina-Dungy, a critical race studies scholar, presented a passionate and informative webinar about wrongful stops and searches of Black civilians and the aggressive police action when encountering people of color.

“The reality...is that Black civilians disproportionately experience a range of negative police behavior which ultimately affects their attitudes towards the police,” Cobbina-Dungy said.

She followed up by going over the statistics of police force investigations within

the past 40 years. Even with an increase in police force investigations, tragic incidents such as the Michael Brown and George Floyd murders still occur.

Cobbina-Dungy highlighted the importance of protests and how they create change. Protesting is the action of verbally and physically showing disapproval or dissent towards an idea or action. They have become common in light of the police shootings and lack of proper investigations.

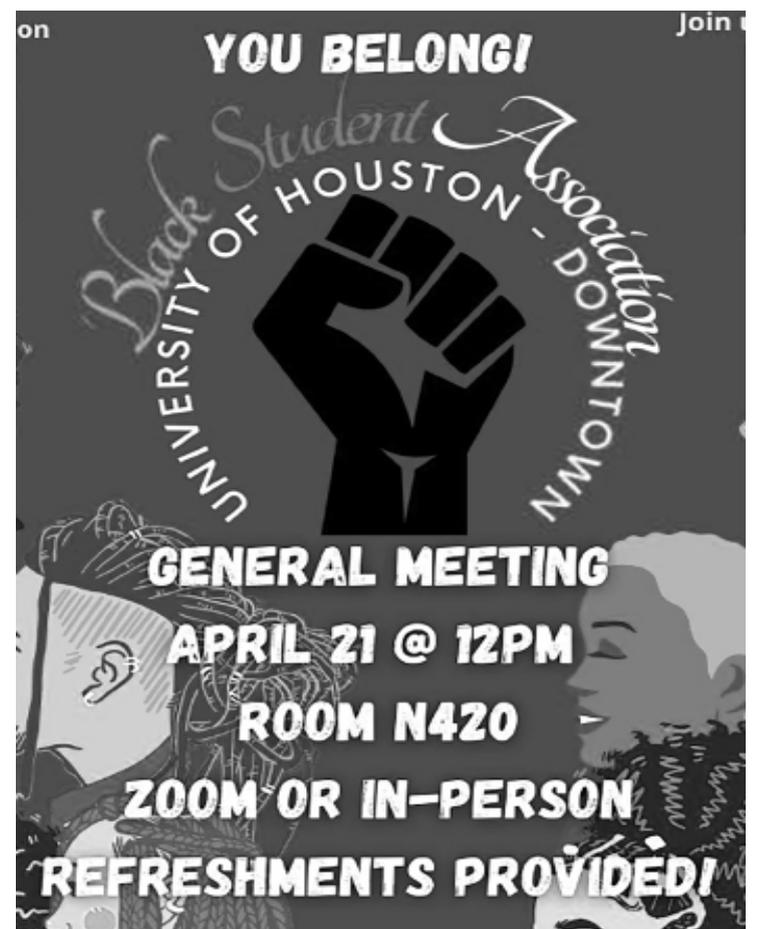
She shared the story of Freddy Gray who was arrested for possession of a knife. The 25-year-old died

in police custody due to severe spine and neck injuries, which triggered a major protest that included looting and rioting.

Cobbina-Dungy stated that people of color are often weary of interaction with law enforcement due to the aggressive and sometimes targeted interactions they have witnessed against others.

The presentation concluded with the positive outcomes of the Black Lives Matter movement and their nonviolent protest initiatives.

For more webinars, visit the Center for Critical Race Studies page on UHD’s official website





Rice University hosts Ted talk on challenging assumptions

BY SHAHERYAR KHAN

TEDxRiceU, an independently organized TED event at Rice University, held its annual conference on April 9, where experts shared their ideas correlating this year’s theme, “Challenging Assumptions.”

The event speakers are experts in their respective fields.

They had stories worth sharing with the public, speaking on topics relating to science and engineering, architecture, economics, human trafficking, and gender-based violence.

This spring’s speakers were professors from Rice University: Mathew Brake, Carlos Jiménez, Jaeyeon Chung, and Houston-based philanthropist advocating against human trafficking Eileen Dong.

“We have to challenge our assumptions

in order to tackle the challenges of 21st century engineering,” Brake said, “which the committee liked enough to solidify their choice of theme of challenging assumptions.”

Brake, an assistant professor of mechanical engineering, speech was called “Fiction of Friction.” In his speech, Brake says that “friction is an illusion,” and that friction is a “fictitious concept used to describe many different small scale and multi-scale phenomena.”

Brake’s goal for his presentation was to present his topic “approachable and understandable.” In the effort to engage and leave a lasting impression on the audience, Brake associated the concept of friction with rock n roll.

Jiménez is a professor of architecture and shared his architectural vision with the audi-

ence. During his talk, he shared his views on five builds and how they relate to architecture.

Jiménez is a tenured professor at Rice University and operates a design studio in Houston called Carlos Jiménez Studio.

Chung is an assistant professor of marketing at the Jones Graduate School of Business. Her topic of discussion was on the rise of the sharing economy and if motivation is a crucial element.

“People who are driven by other reasons tend to be more successful than those who merely do it for money,” Chung said.

Chung related her topic to the hospitality industry, particularly hotels versus Airbnb.

The final speaker was Dong, who shared the painful story that inspired her to fight for people who have



L-R: Mathew Brake, Jaeyeon Chung, Carlos Jimenez and Eileen Dong speak at a Ted talk hosted at Rice University.

Credit: Shaheryar Khan.

suffered from domestic violence and human trafficking.

“I am beyond grateful that I have recovered from such darkness, but the darkness does not end here. The harm that sexual assault and domestic violence brings does not end when the act ends,” Dong said.

Her experience mo-

tivates her to challenge the way things and jump hurdles to reach her goal.

“Like a butterfly flying in the sky, there is no limit to its journey. My dreams are coming true one by one, little by little, and I can’t wait to see the day when the light conquers the darkness, and our

children are free from fear.”

The TEDxRiceU event was an inspiring event full of beautiful stories and ideas.

For more information on the event, follow the official Instagram account @tedxriceu and be on the lookout for the entire broadcast at ted.com

Tour de Houston

Continued from page 1

Put on by Apache Corporation, Tour De Houston is a cycling marathon designed to raise money for Houston's reforestation projects.

"Riders will enjoy the city's premier biking event, traveling through some of the city's great neighborhoods while supporting the growth and sustainability of our green spaces," Turner said.

Every year the event takes a different 30-mile route, with the intent of showcasing as much of the city as possible. This year, the route went west through

Memorial Park and towards Katy and Spring Branch.

"It's special after the pandemic. Seeing a lot of people together, it's been a hard couple of years, so it's pretty nice," fellow cyclist Penelope Verhaert said.

The ride kicked off on April 3 at sunrise from Allen Parkway and onto Memorial Drive.

Cyclists rode through Memorial Park, biking next to the almost complete Memorial Park land bridge and turned onto Writ Road.

The first rest stop was held at Landrum Middle School. Cyclists on the 20-mile route turned around here and

rode back through Memorial Park.

Cyclists on the 40-mile and 60-mile routes continued down Hammerly Boulevard toward Lee Elementary school.

The 60-mile cyclists finished their trek on West Little York Road to Thornton Middle School and would head back the way they came to complete their 60-mile journey.

Fellow cyclist Elgin Wells said the reason he comes to the event every year is to bike with his fellow cyclists and to see as much of the city as possible on his bike.

"This is a great training ride." Wells said. "It's just a great ride, you get to see Houston, with your bike. The event is so

well supported."

The event was well supported with police at all major intersections and plenty of volunteers at each rest stop.

All proceeds from the event benefit the Houston Parks and Recreation Department, which operates and maintains most parks throughout the greater Houston area.

After the event, riders were treated to a post marathon party that included food and drinks provided by Ultra, Dominoes, HEB, and Raising Canes.

Houston Bike Plan was set up at the event and was talking about Houston's efforts to become a bike friendly city under the League of American Bicyclists.

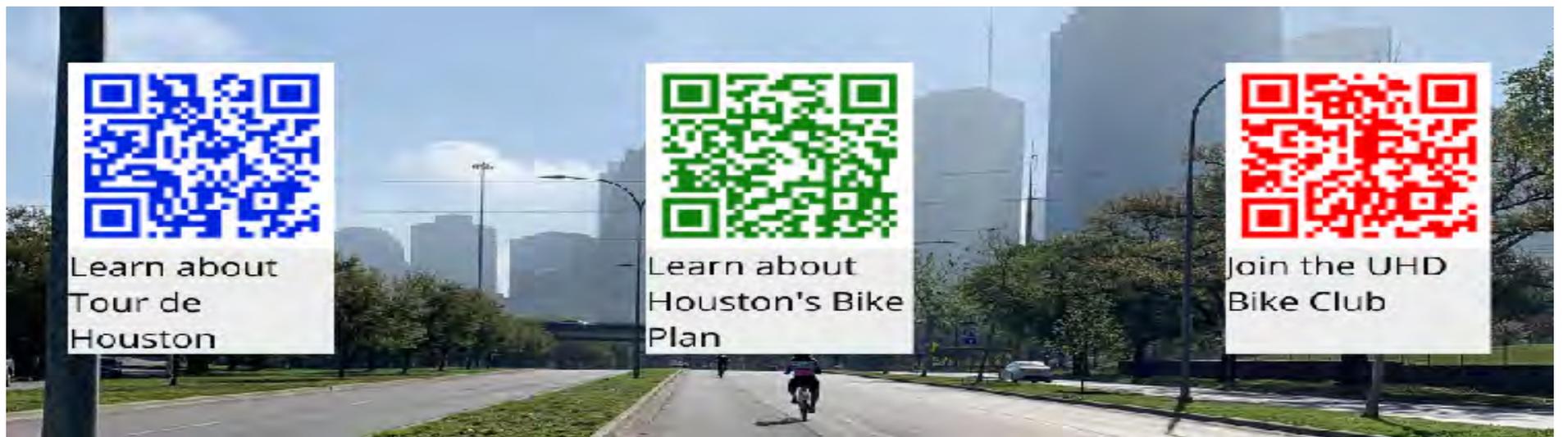


Cyclists biking through the Memorial Park Tunnels on the return trip. Credit: Edward Saenz

Currently the city has about 260 miles of bike routes, Mayor Turner wants that to be near 1000 miles by 2027.

According to HoustonBikePlan.org, the ultimate goal is for the city to have well over 1600 miles of bikeways and have Houston be a, "safer, more accessible, Gold level Bike-Friend-

ly City." UHD has a bike club that hosts monthly rides for all cyclist levels and is working on making UHD a bike friendly campus as well. Their mission is to "encourage students, alumni, faculty, and staff the opportunity to ride together on organized rides in and around the



Credit: Edward Saenz

Uninsured Program ends due to lack of funding

BY SERGIO PRESA JR

The Health Resources & Services Administration stopped accepting claims on April 5 for their Uninsured Program for COVID-19 vaccines and testing due to a lack of funding as announced in March.

The Uninsured Program reimbursed health care providers who provide COVID-19 testing, treatment and vaccines to people without health insurance.

When the program first rolled out, it was funded by legislation related to the corona-

virus pandemic, such as the Families First Coronavirus Response Act. Three other pieces of legislation, the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act, the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, and the American Rescue Plan of 2021 kept the HRSA's program funded.

Due to the lack of sufficient funds, the HRSA announced in a press release that claims for COVID-19 health treatments and testing submitted after March

22 would not be adjudicated for payment. After April 5 claims for COVID-19 vaccines will not be adjudicated for payment.

The HRSA listed several other resources where uninsured individuals could get access to COVID-19 related health services. Some of the other sources include Medicaid, or the Healthcare marketplace.

Also, COVID tests. gov and the HRSA's Find a Health Center resource could help point the uninsured in the right direction

for their health needs. The HRSA also noted that per the CDC's COVID-19 Vaccination Program requirements, healthcare providers must administer COVID-19 vaccine doses at no cost to recipients. Around \$18.78 billion has been paid by the HRSA for claims regarding COVID-19 testing, treatment, and vaccinations since the Uninsured Program's inception.

For the uninsured individuals in the Houston and Harris County area, the county still of-



Credit: Giselle Oviedo

fers free health services for COVID-19. Harris County Public Health offers free COVID-19 PCR tests, COVID-19 shots which include booster shots. Whoever

wishes to sign up for a COVID-19 vaccination through Harris County can register at vacstrac.hctx.net or call 832-927-8787.

Local Business Spotlight

Especial founder speaks on building clothing brand

BY CHRIS KEMP

Chris O’Neil, a Houston-native and founder of Especial Clothing Co., distinguishes his brand from local competition by staying focused on his brand’s theme to “Show Love.”

It is no secret that Houston is one of the most diverse cities in the United States. This is reflected in every aspect of the culture on display here, but none more so than our sense of style. It can be

a challenge for clothing brands to stand out amid so much diverse competition.

O’Neil presently works a nine-to-five as a professional accountant and is a devout father. Coming from a professional background, he has a unique perspective on the start of his business.

He initially struggled to balance his responsibilities as a parent and full-time job with a passion for street wear.

“I created Especial shortly after my

first daughter, Sage, was born just over ten years ago,” O’Neil said.

“My gear was at skate shops around the city, but I had no plan outside of that at the time.”

O’Neil said he chose the name Especial because it is rooted in the Hispanic culture so inherent in Texas.

“I wanted to create something that wasn’t so personal it’d discourage supporters from talking about the brand and the origins of the brand name,” O’Neil said.

“I want them to be able to tell my brand just from the feel of the garment. The person should be able to feel how ‘special’ my garments are. The name ‘Especial’ just helps to set that expectation and elevate the brand off top.

“The quality of my pieces is something I pride myself on a lot,” O’Neil said, as he explains the premise

behind the name of his brand. O’Neil envisions himself as someone who “appreciates aesthetics and design in general.”

Since Especial’s inception, O’Neil has continued to refine his approach to his creative process. He’s always taken his time designing pieces, most taking several years.

O’Neil has nurtured the concept behind the bluebonnet graphic (released in 2021) since he started Especial 10 years ago.

“I’m all about samples dawg,” O’Neil said. “I don’t move on anything without a sample I’m happy with first. I used to not want to pay so much for samples but now it’s a necessity.”

When asked what makes his brand especial, O’Neil said: “You know how we can both see the same thing, but our experience influences how we perceive



Chris O’Neils daughters, Sage (L) and Phoenix (R) show off their custom “Show Love” hoodies. Courtesy: Chris O’Neil



A collage of Especial pieces, including shirts, caps, and stickers. Credit: Chris Kemp

that thing?” His designs have passionate narratives behind them, all very personal to him.

“I grew up in the 90s, and these are my stories that I put on these garments.”

On top of his full-time job and being a parent, O’Neil easily puts in 20 hours a week hosting his pop-up shops at various venues around town, he calls them his “Mobile Hustling Units.”

This may be the most admirable aspect of O’Neil’s entrepreneurial spirit. Chris

O’Neil is also redefining how he promotes his brand. He regularly shouts out people that visit his mobile pop-up shops on social media.

To O’Neil, this is not a marketing campaign, it is how he shows love to the people that love and support his brand.

“It comes from a place of honest gratitude. I want to let people know... let them see they’re a part of my growth. Saying ‘thank you’ don’t cost a thing. It’s part of how I show love.”

Spring is not over yet, calling all garden lovers

BY ANITA GOOLCHARAN

April is National Garden Month. The commemorative month was declared in 2002 as an extension to National Gardening Week.

Gardening is an activity that offers many benefits. Not only is it an activity to promote sustainability efforts but can be a source of happiness, companionship and help reduce anxiety and stress.

“It’s very therapeutic to spend time outdoors seeing the plants grow and all the tiny and sometimes large organisms that they attract,” Vice President of the Garden and Compost Club Indira Zaldivar said. “I’ve met some of my best friends through gardening at school, and gardening

together has been a heartfelt, memorable experience.”

Gardening is also great for the environment and provides an “opportunity to appreciate soil and the hard-working ecosystem that makes for successful yield of harvests and blooming.” Plants filter the air and help lower the carbon footprint.

You can celebrate National Garden month by creating one of your own.

Springtime is the prime time to begin gardening. The season offers the perfect climate to nurture many kinds of herbs, vegetables, or fruit.

Another way to observe the month would be to start a compost area. According to the



Garden & Compost Club Vice President, Indira Zaldivar plants swiss chards at UHD’s Sustainability Garden. Credit: Diana Ambrosio

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency food scraps and yard waste currently make up 30% of what is thrown away.

Those items can be composted to reduce the space they take up

in landfills. Composting can also reduce the production of methane, a greenhouse gas. For those lacking a green thumb, visiting a local garden is a fun way to celebrate the month.

Houston has many options, and most are only 20 minutes away from UHD.

The McGovern Centennial Gardens and Japanese Gardens are a beautiful oasis from the city.

Each of the gardens features varieties of shrubs and flora.

Another Houston favorite is the Houston Botanic Garden. The massive property has two main gardens, Global Collection Garden, and the Susan Garver Family Discovery Garden.

Blodgett Urban Gardens, located near Texas Southern University, is a community garden that aims to harvest and sell organically grown produce to locals. The UHD sustainability garden and

compost center offers a variety of ways students can celebrate the month as well. Started in the fall of 2015, the UHD Garden club maintains the garden with the help of volunteers.

“Gardening rewards you for your hard work,” Zaldivar said.

“Together, we’ve grown food crops such as corn, tomatoes, black-eyed beans, and more and have enjoyed the delicious produce and shared it with our families and friends.”

There is no experience necessary to join the UHD Garden club as the club promotes education and gives advice on sustainability.

To join or for more information contact uhdgardencompostclub@gmail.com or follow @uhdgardencompost.

Theatre Review

Hamilton cast blows Houston away with final performances

BY TAYLOR ENOCHS

The Angelica Company's "Hamilton" cast left Houston breathless at the Hobby Center as they continued their tour into Arkansas.

"Houston's lit!" screamed Alexander Hamilton (Edred Uto-mi), as he rode off on a skateboard into the lively Houston city.

Hamilton is a musical about the story of Alexander Hamilton, an immigrant who became George Washington's right-hand man during the Revolutionary War and the nation's first treasury secretary.

The North American Hamilton tour consists

of three separate casts performing across the U.S.: the Phillip cast, the Angelica cast, and the Peggy cast. From Feb 22 – March 20, the Angelica cast made its post-shutdown return in Houston, the city welcoming the cast with open arms.

"Dear Houston, thanks for my (literal) first rodeo, but mostly for NASA," said Kendyl Yokoyama in an Instagram post, an understudy for many of the characters in the Angelica cast.

While Hamilton is notoriously known for being a sold-out show, most Houston shows ended with empty seats

making it accessible to everyone.

Stepping into the room, the ambiance is nostalgic for those who have only seen the performance through Disney+ or only listened through the soundtrack. Nearly three hours long with one intermission, it is an R&B-styled musical illustrating the upcoming of America.

"I was in tears during the very first song," said Addison Enochs, a longtime fan of Hamilton, describing her experience seeing Hamilton for the first time live.

"I still can't believe I got to see it live."

Houston native John

Devereaux, an alum of Westfield High School who plays as ensemble and King George in the musical, leaves bitterly-sweetly.

"Being on the road, I don't really get to see a lot of my family and my friends for big events, and you're kind of at the mercy of the itinerary," Devereaux told ABC13. "I just thank God we were able to be in Houston for four weeks. I've just been trying to soak it all in before we got to head out eventually."

The Angelica Hamilton tour has recently closed their curtains in Fayetteville, Arkansas and will perform in Greensboro, North



L-R: Taylor Enochs, Addison Enochs, and Cheryl Smith, enjoying the show. Courtesy: Taylor Enochs.

Carolina through April 24. For those who missed their chance to see it, a performance

with the original cast for Hamilton is available on Disney+ with a subscription.

Restaurant Review

The Greasy Spoon elevates taste buds to soulful cuisine

BY ERIN HOUSTON

Max Bozeman II opened The Greasy Spoon in 2020 with the mission to "elevate the culture of Southern cuisine."

They have a location in Pearland, north-side, as well as a food truck in Houston Grub Park.

They recently hosted a Black Music Week event with multiple performances of jazz and soul music, as well as local stand-up comedians.

The restaurant boasts a welcoming atmosphere by both the staff and customers. The inside has a cafeteria design with a modern twist, donning gold, white, and black colors.

When you walk in, the food smells so good it leaves you ready to taste everything on the menu. Arriving on time is a must!

The line ends up out the door and the tables fill up very quickly.

Ordering off the cafeteria-style line will get your food right away, but if you are ordering off the cook-to-order menu, that takes around 35-45 minutes.

I ordered the oxtails with yams and collard greens and a side of cornbread.

The portion of the oxtail was great with about 6-7 pieces on the plate, and biting into the oxtail, the meat melts in the mouth. The meat was very tender, divine, and it fell right off the bone.

The yams had the perfect balance of sweetness and were soft and warm.

The flavor revealed the brown sugar, the cinnamon, and everything else mixed in to make them.

The collard greens were not too salty and

had a small touch of spice. The real bummer was that there was no meat mixed into the greens. Usually, greens are made with smoked turkey, but nonetheless they were still flavorful without the meat.

Lastly, the cornbread disappointed because it initially looked good but one bite revealed it was dry. I had to take a few sips of my drink after eating a piece.

Overall, the visit to The Greasy Spoon was an excellent choice.

The food was great and the entertainment from the live music and comedians was excellent. It was a great experience as a first timer going to a restaurant with live entertainment.

This is a place that can leave you with a smile on your face, a full stomach, and have you ready to go home and sleep.



Credit: Giselle Oviedo

Movie Review

'Morbius' delivers a fool instead of a compelling character

BY JAMES JUREWICZ

"Morbius" is a 2022 superhero action film from Sony Pictures, the newest addition to their comic book movie mythology of the Spider-Man Universe.

The film stars Jared Leto, Adria Arjona, Matt Smith, Jared Harris, Al Madrigal, and Tyrese Gibson.

The film is about a doctor who has a rare blood condition with a fatal prognosis. To save himself, Dr. Morbius (Jared Leto) develops a synthetic blood serum based on vampire bat saliva with healing capabilities and unexpected vampiric side effects.

Morbius becomes "a living vampire" having advanced strength,

senses, speed and a bat-like sensory echolocation. When his adopted brother steals his serum and is corrupted by the newfound power, Morbius alone holds the ability to stop him.

"Did you see a woman wearing jeans?" an FBI agent asks a confused store clerk.

More poor dialogue like this degrades the film.

The plot is muddled and flimsy, a reread of multiple superhero, science fiction and horror films.

Power gained by the hero is stolen by the villain, ensuing conflict. The film is just two similarly powered individuals fighting with each other.

Sony is establishing a Spider-Man Universe

of its own and "Morbius" is the third entry, following "Venom" (2018) and "Venom: Let There Be Carnage" (2021).

"Morbius" was a missed opportunity by Sony to insert a great supernatural character to the overall Spider-Man story.

Leto's performance is stiff and underwhelming. The actor seems like he does not want to be in this film.

In a ridiculous scene the main villain Milo (Matt Smith) flexes and dances for the camera, the results are insufferable.

Framed for murder, Morbius is pursued by FBI agents Simon (Tyrese Gibson) and Alberto (Al Madrigal) who are the most entertaining

characters in the film. Sony made the mistake of not including more of their humorous dialogue and interactions.

The film's computer effects were lacking. Better graphics were conjured in the early '90s. In "Morbius," the visuals are heavily inspired by "The Matrix" (1999). Bullet dodging slow motion, and gravity defying stunts dominate the film's action.

There is a confusing divide between Disney's Marvel brand and Sony's Spider-Man. The companies have agreed to share the Spider-Man character.

Do not waste your money on this movie, wait for the streaming release or wait a bit longer and try the public library. Spoiler



Courtesy: imdb

Alert: Michael Keaton dominates both mid credit scenes as Adrian Toomes/The Vulture, a longtime Tom Holland Spiderman villain.

Other than the credits' pleasant turquoise and violet color scheme, this film does not have much going for it.

Movie Review

'The Lost City' offers throwback to adventure comedies

BY JAMES JUREWICZ

"The Lost City" is an adventure comedy-film starring Sandra Bullock, Channing Tatum, Brad Pitt, Daniel Radcliffe, and Da 'Vine Joy Randolph.

Successful author Loretta Sage (Sandra Bullock) is kidnapped during a book tour and brought to South America. The cover model for her books, Alan Caprison (Channing Tatum) witnesses the kidnapping and tracks her cell phone, launching his own rescue mission.

Loretta's captor is Abigail Fairfax (Daniel Radcliffe), a billionaire oozing eccentricity. Fairfax believes Loretta possesses knowledge to find a mythical lost city of treasure on an island with an active volcano.

Bullock anchors the film as the intelligent

lead. The widowed Loretta is a character going through a low point in her career and the tour is a way to bring an infusion of popularity to her brand.

"I'm certified CPR, I'm certified CrossFit, I have snacks," says the adorable Alan Caprison character.

Tatum was perfect for the role of the determined yet dim-witted Alan. He repeatedly gets common phrases wrong to hilarious effect.

Da 'Vine Joy Randolph portrays Loretta's loyal publicist Beth, who seems more of a friend than employee to the author. Beth's tireless pursuit of her missing boss is an entertaining and humorous subplot in the film.

The best performance of the film was by Pitt as Jack Trainer. His character is a former



Courtesy: imdb

Navy Seal working for the CIA, recruited by Alan to find Loretta.

Trainer embodies the tough guy role from Loretta's books. Pitt displays an unexpected knack for physical comedy with Trainer.

The film was heavily advertised with two distinctly different movie trailers. The first trailer showcased the story and the film's stars Bullock, Tatum, and Radcliffe.

The second trailer introduced Pitt's character and changed the entire dynamic between Bullock and Tatum. Pitt's inclusion in the trailer is sure to draw more ticket sales.

It may have been seen as a necessary marketing strategy although it would have been better to be surprised by Pitt's inclusion instead of already knowing he

was in the cast.

"The Lost City" is a throwback to romantic adventure comedies of years past with major echoes of "Romancing the Stone" (1984).

That film is also about a popular author lost in a South American jungle while pursuing a mythic jewel for criminals.

The Nee Brothers, Adam and Aaron directed "The Lost City." The brothers' best-known work is the crime film "Band of Robbers" (2015) a modern adaptation of Mark Twain's characters Tom Sawyer and Huck Finn.

Written by Seth Gordon, "The Lost City" is entertaining, a mix of nonstop laughs and jungle adventure. The tropical volcanic backdrop perfectly embodies an '80s or '90s adventure film.

Fortnite adds no build-mode, revives stagnant battle royale

BY EDWARD SAENZ

The incredibly popular game, Fortnite, has done away with its most recognized mechanic, building, sort of.

Following a short event that temporarily removed the building mechanic from Fortnite, Epic Games has announced that a “No-Build Mode” would become a staple of the game.

Epic Games has a long history of doing crazy over the top events in Fortnite.

In October 2019, Epic Games did their biggest event yet, they shutdown the whole game.

Called, “The End Event,” the entire game of Fortnite was unplayable for over 37 hours and only a single black

hole was viewable when you logged in. The event marked the beginning of Fortnite: Chapter 2, which brought a brand new map and a complete overhaul to the game’s mechanics.

The launch of Fortnite: Chapter 3 was no different. Epic Games made their biggest change yet, they got rid of building. As a part of their on-going “story” in Fortnite, Marvel character Dr. Strange used his magical powers to get rid of building.

The event only lasted a few days, but was so well received that on March 29 Epic Games announced a permanent game mode called Zero Build.

“The battle has changed! No-build Battle Royale arrives in

Fortnite with the launch of Fortnite Zero Build. Zero Build is a pure test of weapon, item, and traversal ability,” Epic Games said in their announcement of the new game mode.

The launch of the game mode brought renewed attention to the game, with many popular twitch streamers and veteran players returning solely to play the new mode.

“I think no build mode makes the game more approachable to general audiences,” Daymian Hogue said about the new game mode. “At the cost of making the game less unique, I think it’s a worthwhile trade off, as someone who found the building obnoxious to the game play experi-

ence.”

He went on to say that the gamemode will make him play more as the building aspect, “felt very interruptive to the game play experience I want out of a battle royale.”

On April 2 and 3, the weekend following the new mode being added, Twitch.tv hosted a No Build Mode tournament with a prize pool of \$450,000.

The event invited 100 of the platform’s top streamers and put Fortnite back at the top of Twitch in terms of viewership, with Fortnite superstar Turner “Tfue” Tenney’s team winning the cash prize of \$21,000.

The platform has already announced a series of No Build tour-



Fortnite players builds walls to avoid taking damage in gun fights. Courtesy: Edward Saenz

naments in partnership with several of its top creators.

“Offering a no build mode should have been something they did a long time ago.” UHD student Brandon Erb said about the new game mode.

“This mode gives players a way to play the battle royal portion of the game in such a

way that’s consistent with other games in the same genre.”

He believes this new game mode will “open up a wider potential audience for the game.

“Additionally, I can’t really imagine a reason not to do this. Just seems like up-sides to me.”

WNBA player still detained in Russia, case still developing

BY MADIHA HUSSAIN

Brittney Griner, who is considered one of the best female basketball players, was arrested at a Moscow airport in mid-February on drug charges and faces an unpredictable future given the Russia-Ukraine war.

During the WNBA’s offseason, Griner was in Russia to play for UMMC Ekaterinburg, a Russian women’s basketball team. Griner was traveling with vape cartridges containing hashish oil. Marijuana for recreational and medicinal use is currently illegal in Russia.

Griner’s case has been kept lowkey in the media out of fear that Russia may use Griner as a political pawn. Other WNBA players have been told to not talk about the issue to the media. Russian officials have

only released a minimal amount of information about Griner’s arrest and detention.

Professor John Linantud, who teaches political science at UHD, states that it may be difficult to ascertain information from Russia since it has a long history of keeping secrets.

“[Russia] has a type of system where, if they decide to crack down on you, it’s really hard to do anything about it,” Linantud said. “That’s the risk of getting in trouble in a place like Russia.”

U.S. embassy officials reportedly met with Griner on March 23 and stated that she was in good health.

Russian officials broadcasted on March 6 that an American basketball player was in custody and later identified her as Griner.

Russian officials prolonged Griner’s

detention through May 19 even though the WNBA’s season begins on May 6.

“The best thing for [Griner’s] family to do at this point is to continue to work behind the scenes with her lawyers over in Russia,” Linantud added.

He also says that in the worst-case scenario, it is possible that Russian officials will sentence Griner to the maximum penalty as a form of propaganda to the Russian people to symbolize strength over America.

Griner’s arrest has sparked interest in her case because of her LGBTQ+ status. Discrimination based on sexual orientation is prominent in Russia. Russian President Vladimir Putin has said that as long as he was ruling Russia, he would not legalize same-sex marriage.

UHD seeks applicants for next The Dateline Editor

The University of Houston-Downtown is seeking applicants for the position of Editor for The Dateline, the student-run, bi-weekly newspaper.

This paid position begins summer 2022 (\$425/issue) and the applicants must commit to at least the fall semester but ideally the full 2022-2023 academic year. Duties include responsibility for the overall operation of the paper. Editors assemble and manage a team of student writers and sub-editors and assign them to cover news and events.

Position requires some familiarity with the use of Adobe InDesign page-making software.

The paper runs stories anticipating campus events as well as reviewing them, including student activities and organizations, academics, athletics and lifestyle,



university administration, and student government; also cultural coverage of activities in the theatre, film, music, sports and arts communities, particularly as they are of interest to UHD students.

Qualifications include at least sophomore standing, at least one semester in residence at UHD, successful completion of basic writing and communications courses, and a current 3.0 cumulative GPA (3.5

preferred). Applications accepted until position is filled.

To apply, please send a letter of interest indicating your reasons and qualifications for applying for the position. Include your resume as well as an unofficial copy of your UHD transcript.

Send these documents to The Dateline faculty advisor, Joe Sample, associate professor, at samplej@uhd.edu.

Reggaeton founding father Daddy Yankee retires sooner than expected, but his contributions permeate the industry

Fans expressed sadness over the premature end to the “King of Reggaeton”'s career but reminisce on how his prolific career steered crowds, especially youth towards a positive, creative outlet

BY INDIRA ZALDIVAR

After a legendary 32-year career, Daddy Yankee announced his retirement and last tour, unleashing an outpour of appreciation for “El Rey del Reggaeton” (King of Reggaeton) fundamental contributions to the booming genre and sadness as fans hoped his work would extend over more decades.

The 45-year-old artist announced his retirement in a video on Instagram and website saying that he finally sees the finish line. Yankee thanked fans for helping make reggaeton a global phenomenon.

“I will now enjoy with you all you have given me,” he tells fans in Spanish in the video. “You were the ones who

gave me the key to the door to turn this genre into the greatest of the world.”

The announcement shocked fans who have followed the six-time Latin Grammy-award winner’s reign over the hottest charts for more than three decades. Some speculate we may see more of his work at some point.

“He is full of it,” UHD alumnus Fabian Ramirez said in disbelief. “His lifestyle can’t afford to retire this young.”

What’s not up for debate though is that Yankee is a founding father of reggaeton who has inspired many to follow in his footsteps. His music proliferated reggaeton when it was still a recently coined genre by Puerto Ricans

based on African and Caribbean influences in the ‘90s.

For example, his international 2004 hit “Gasolina” popularized reggaeton around the world.

While not an avid Yankee listener, UHD student Nohely Martinez remembers the icon as a big part of her childhood who influenced her life. She remembers a kid next door who was “always singing ‘me gusta la gasolina’” (I like gasoline), and that would make her mom laugh.

“Anytime his music got played at a school dance, things got pretty lit,” UHD student Chris Kemp remembers.

To this day, nostalgic songs like “Gasolina,” or “Rompe” are expected to instantly



Credit Shaheryar Khan

fuel the life of a party.

His music is not only party-specific as his hype-me-up songs are especially useful when performing ordinary tasks such as getting ready for the day or doing homework after dreading it.

Yankee’s voice coaches you on low-energy days through a lively “shaky-shaky” beat and confidence-boosting lyrics that leave you “con calma.”

More seriously though, his unproblematic and successful career has inspired youth to turn to the creative outlet that is music instead of dangerous escapes that are unfortunately more readily available.

“In the neighborhoods where we grew up most of us wanted to be drug dealers,” Yankee said in his farewell video. “Today... I go down to the neighborhoods...and most want to be singers.”

I can attest to that statement from my childhood years living in Honduras, a Central American country. My classmates, especially young boys, would look up to this bright star and dream about being singers despite living around gang-plagued hotspots.

“I always worked to not fail you...and to... inspire all the little kids to be leaders, to dream about growing up, and to not think about limitations, and to work for their families, and for what’s theirs,” he said.

Ramon Luis Ayala Rodríguez, as the idol is commonly known, exemplifies the fruits of hard work. Staying steadily at the top of his field for so long without causing conflicts speaks of his discipline.

The King of Reggaeton carefully disguises mature content in his lyrics through metaphors. His music videos showcase sexy moves and spotlight the

sensual side of Latin American culture.

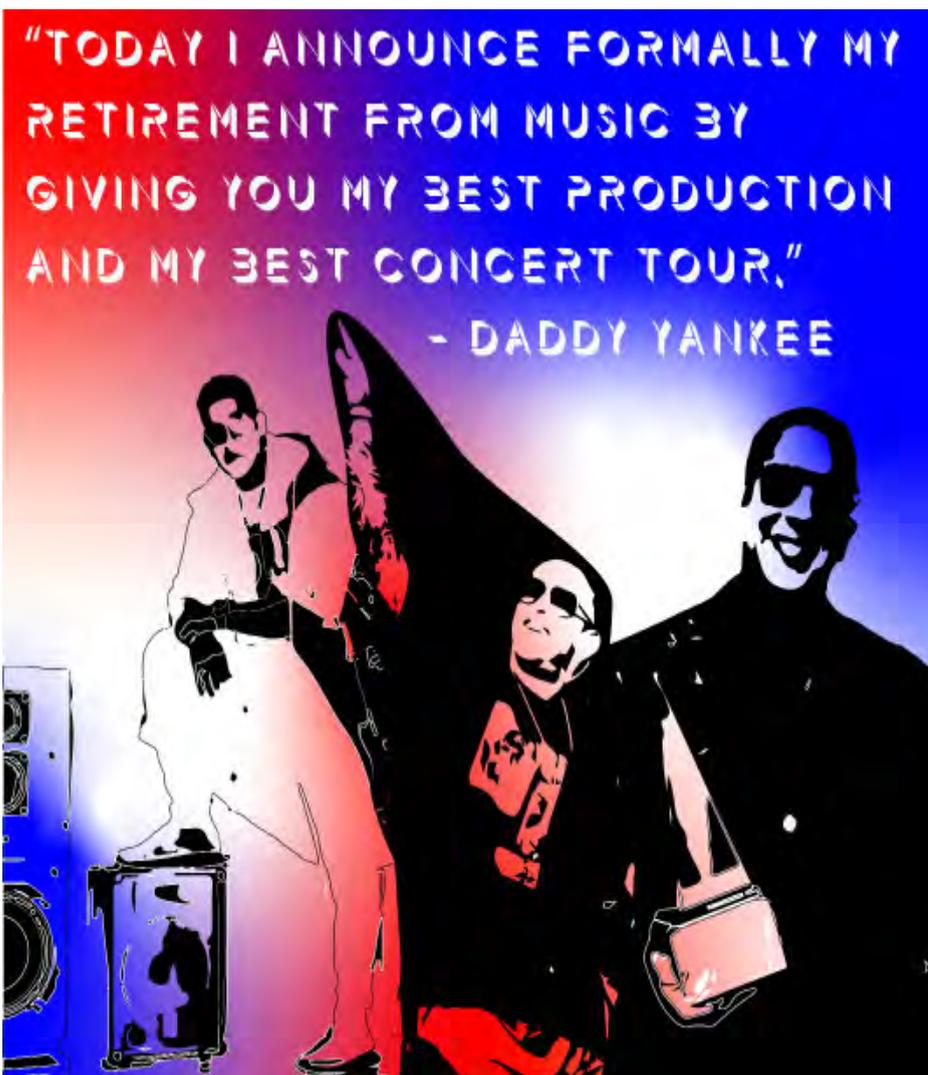
UHD student Saida Rios expressed sadness upon learning of his retirement and looks forward to seeing him perform live one last time in “La Ultima Vuelta” tour (the last lap).

“I’m definitely buying front-row tickets,” Rios added.

Yankee’s fan base in Houston will receive him with open arms at the Toyota Center on Sept. 15. to kick off Hispanic Heritage Month in one of the most memorable ways possible.

The live performances of Puerto Rico’s most successful artist and one of the biggest idols in Latin music will surely be missed.

For now, we have his last album “Legendaddy” as consolation and at least three-decades worth of music available to delight us in the long haul.



Credit: Sarah Ramirez