

Dateline: Downtown



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Dateline Downtown welcomes submissions to the editor from any member of the UH system. Submissions should be no more than 800 words, include the author's full name, phone number or email address, and affiliation with the University, including classification and major. Writers Guidelines are available on the UHD/dateline webpage. Anonymous submissions will not be published.

Deliver submissions to room S-260, email them to **editordatelinedowntown@gmail.com** or fax them to (713) 221-8569. Letters to the Editor and reader submissions may be edited for space, content, spelling, grammar and malicious, vulgar, or hateful statements. Submissions must be the original work of the writer and must be signed. All submissions become property of Dateline: Downtown and will not be returned.

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Editorial: Welcome to the new world

by Quintin Coleman

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Editorials

First and foremost, my apologies for the late introduction. This sort of thing is more customary for the first issue of the year, not the second. My name is Quintin Coleman, editor of the 61st volume of *Dateline: Downtown*, the official student-run newspaper of University of Houston – Downtown. I'm grateful to be a part of this organization and will continue to be until I have to give up my position upon graduating in Spring 2019 with my master's degree in rhetoric and composition. My goal is to become a college professor; ideally, this would be either at a community college or at a small university, depending on employment requirements and the like.

For those of you hoping that there's a long and exciting backstory about me, lower those hopes because there isn't one. I'm simply a man who was born and raised in Houston,

graduated with a bachelor's degree in journalism from the University of Houston – Main campus in 2011, managed two businesses from top to bottom before the age of 26, and has had his fair share of internal battles.

Being the editor for this paper is the biggest challenge I have undertaken in my life thus far, and I was an elementary school teacher for a brief moment in time. Part of the challenge is simply trying to achieve the vision I have for this paper as I want this paper to have a little bit of something for everyone as far as content goes. That means I want there to be technology news for people who want it, as well as stories related to business, psychology, unbiased politics (though probably not the heavy, heavy political topics; I feel like the readership can get that just about anywhere), video games, music and a host of other subjects and topics.

In other words, I want my run of the newspaper to be marked by having a variety of subject matter that will cover as many interests of the UHD student body as possible.

The other challenge that comes with being an editor is trying to manage life (as well as trying to manage constant e-mails but mostly life). Not to get too philosophical in a student newspaper but life has a way of throwing us for a loop; it is possible for us to be in your best mental space you've ever been with less than ideal situations being thrown our way. I have been helping my mom trying to manage a pretty rough illness she has been dealing with for almost a year now. I also lost my aunt who was a second mother to me earlier in the summer. However, that has been counterbalanced with many of the other great things that have been happening in the interim, such

as experiencing new things to do in Houston and getting the editing job for the newspaper in the first place. Despite what I've had to deal with, I can undoubtedly say that I am in the best place I've ever been in my life.

So, Gators, before you delve into what will be a great issue of the paper, I want you to challenge yourself to do something. Whether it's going the extra mile to actually read all of the articles your professor assigns you to read (and actually understand the content), going for that job or promotion you don't think you're fully qualified for or just taking a chance and striking up a conversation with that person you had your eye on in class for a little while now, you may find that things will go better than you expect. Taking a chance is how I got to be in the position of writing this editorial after all.

Editorial: Get to know your assistant editor

by Michael Case

Greetings fellow Gators,

My name is Michael Case and I'm the assistant editor, staff writer, and intern at *Dateline*. I'm a senior, getting my Bachelor of Science in Technical Communications, formerly Professional Writing. I have been writing for *Dateline* for close to two years and enjoy it immensely.

I was born and raised in Houston, my tastes are diverse as this beautiful city. I am a major Houston sports fan, regularly tail-

gating outside NRG Stadium or BBVA Compass Stadium. I frequent our excellent museums, love those free Thursdays! I support the local breweries as well as the local theatre scene. I love summer blockbusters and midnight shows at the River Oaks Theater. I eat tacos for breakfast, Vietnamese for lunch and barbecue for dinner. I look forward to crawfish season as much as football season. You can find me playing video games at Neil's Bahr downtown, or watching games at Little Wood-

row's in the Heights. I love the rich, cultural diversity the city of Houston offers.

I feel pride going to such a great university in the heart of the fourth largest city in the US, as a student and a Houstonian. I believe in honesty, positivity and equality. I'm an optimist who wants to entertain. There are many issues facing our university, city and country, and this paper will address those issues.

As a sports and entertainment writer, I want to inform,

distract and start dialogue. I want to hear from you, the readers. What stories do you want to hear? What did you like? What can we do better as a paper? I hope this semester finds you well and you continue to grow as students. Good luck, Gators!

Regards,

Michael Case

The power of science: UHD alumnae empower Latinas in STEM

by Sonia Sanchez

Two UHD alumnae, Jacqueline Tarango, B.S. and Diana Silva, B.S., are currently starting a nonprofit organization called Empowering Latinas STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics).

The two UHD alumnae co-founded the organization with their mentor, Dr. Anna M. Doro, with a mission to empower every overachieving Latina to optimize their full potential in careers as STEM professionals and leaders for United States' National Defense and Space sectors. Their goal is to foster economic growth and innovation through STEM awareness, mentoring, access to opportunities, support and development.

Their vision is to provide the key to success of Latina students in STEM and become highly valued and influential as the leading innovators, scientists, doctors, mathematicians and engineers of the future.

Both the founders are Latinas who have each earned a bachelor's degree from UHD in the STEM field. Diana graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Chemistry with a concentration in Biochemistry, and Jacqueline graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Biology and specialized in Spanish. Dr. Doro is an author known for her highly technical books and an engineer of the U.S. Department of Defense. She is also a product of STEM outreach program

and well-respected in the Hispanic professional communities.

Tarango and Silva are currently pursuing graduate school in the STEM field. Silva is pursuing a doctoral degree in Biotechnology, and Tarango is pursuing a doctoral degree in Biomedical Engineering while also double majoring in Physical Therapy. Dr. Doro has a Ph.D. in Environmental Science and Engineering from the University of Texas at San Antonio.

"My dream was to have an organization where underrepresented girls could obtain scholarships and opportunities when I finished college," said Jacqueline, "My dream came true when I met with Dr. Anna and Diana and started up the organization."

The Empowering Latinas STEM organization has supporters and technical advisors from the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers (SHPE). Their technical advisor is Rodrigo Garcia, P.E. He is also the Founding Father of the SHPE.

"What we do for our community can benefit the nation," said Garcia, "When there is a group being sidestepped, the nation and our community suffer." Garcia also said that there is a big deficit of women and men in the STEM field. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Latinos make up 17.6 percent of the nation's

population, and they are the largest ethnic group in the country. With many vacant STEM positions open, this means that STEM professions are an opportunity waiting for Latinas to fulfill.

The Empowering Latinas STEM organization also has people from the U.S. Department of Defense who are willing to be mentors for underrepresented youth in STEM seeking guidance and help in obtaining professional careers in national security and defense.

At UHD, the quality enhancement plan is an academic achievement through community engagement, and these recent Latina alumnae exemplify the result of UHD's quality enhancement plan efforts. The director of the Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning is Poonam Gulati Salhotra, Ph.D. She is also an associate professor of microbiology and biology. Jacqueline Tarango, B.S. has conducted research under her supervision.

"I think it is very thoughtful of Jackie to start this initiative, and it is much needed in the Houston community," said Dr. Gulati "If the format of this initiative is successful, it could serve as a good model for other programs and organizations." Her eyes gleamed, as she said "Every field requires diversity; different thinkers, practitioners, and more ideas are needed for a field to grow."

She said fields need to represent what the country looks like, and there are definitely groups being underrepresented.

UHD is a Hispanic-serving institution, and 61 percent of the students are female. The women at UHD could benefit from the programs at Empowering Latinas STEM organization. Ashvanthi is one of Jacqueline's former classmates at UHD. "...when I found out that she created an organization for Latinas in the STEM field, I wasn't surprised!" said Ashvanthi "She shows great leadership for her community!" Melisa Chapa is another former classmate of Jacqueline. "The best thing I love about the organization... is that the organization empowers Latina women to raise the bar on their goals and shares how it is possible to reach them." said Melisa "The organization shares many high-technological internships and career opportunities that I have never thought about." The organization's listed resources sharing those opportunities encouraged Melissa to think outside the box when searching for career opportunities.

If students would like to learn more about Empowering Latinas STEM, they can visit their website: www.empoweringlatinass.org

Don't just read the paper, be a part of it. Apply today at <https://www.uhd.edu/student-life/dateline/Pages/default.aspx> and click on the "Get Involved" tab on the website.

Fill out the brief application and send a sample of your writing to editordatelinedowntown@gmail.com (class essays/assignments are okay). You will hear back from the editor within 2 business days to go over the next steps in the process.

Anyone who is a current UHD student can write for Dateline: Downtown. We welcome students from all majors, classifications and areas of interest to write for Dateline: Downtown so don't hesitate to apply with us today. Feel free to drop in on our meetings held every **Wednesday from 11:30 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. in room S260** to see what we're about.

One year later: How Houston is moving forward after Harvey

by Naomi Cardwell

Roughly one year later post Hurricane Harvey, Harris County, including the city of Houston, addresses the anniversary by introducing a Flood Bond vote to the public. This was a local vote that was given to the Houston community on whether or not to borrow \$2.5 billion via bond to fund flood control projects. This bond would fund at least 230 projects in the Harris county flood district. The areas of emphasis in these projects will be Brays, White Oak, Greens, and other major Bayous.

This referendum entails,

- Expansions of Bayous.
- Construction of additional storm water detention basins.
- Home buyouts.
- Major repairs to flood-damaged drainage infrastructure.
- Property acquisition for presenting the natural flood plains.
- Wetland mitigation bank.
- Channel modifications to improve storm water.
- Speed up construction

of flood control projects that have already started in the city and the rest of the county.

- Provide matching funds for billions more in federal financial aid.
- Drainage Improvements made in partnership with other cities, utility districts, or other local government agencies.
- Upgrading the Harris county flood warning system.

Some of the funds were broken down to \$1.2 billion for channel improvement, \$401 million for detention basins, \$242 million for flood plain land acquisitions, 12.5 million for new flood plain mapping, and 1.25 million for the improved early flood warning system.

After the public voted on this referendum on Saturday, August 25th, the numbers came out to measure about 85% approved. An estimated 150,000 of Harris County's 2.3

million registered voters casted their ballots, according to preliminary. Because the bond passed the taxpayers of Harris County, should expect to see an average increase of at least \$5 per year, in their property tax. This bond has received bipartisan support. Republicans Ed Emmett, County Judge expressed a sense of priority following Harveys' destruction and that flood control and mitigation is now "Job one". Which is true, for our community to move forward we have to acknowledge the resilience we obtained, then go into a chapter of preparation and strategy in protecting our city from future hurricane seasons.

"A lot of politicians say this next November election is the most important election of our lives," said Republican State Rep. Sarah Davis. "But in my opinion, this election today is the most important of our lives, because we didn't vote for a person or party, we voted for each other. We voted to save our communities." It gave people who were

drastically affected, and who saw their city drown, the ability to have a direct vote in a plan of action, in preventing the scale of damages that Hurricane Harvey brought from happening once more.

Mayor Sylvester Turner seconds this idea of priority when he said that "Houston is helping itself while waiting for slow moving financial assistance from the federal government for housing and preventing future flooding." Turner had a mantra as well immediately after hurricane Harvey in which that the Flood Bond is a direct result thereof. The mantra is that the goal for the Houston community is to "build forward, not just build back."

Not your average comic book shop: A look at Bedrock City Comics

by Lisette Perez

It is a common misconception that comic shops only sell comic books and action figures. Although there are comic shops that solely sell that, there are also some that sell a large variety of other things that interest different groups of people. Bedrock City Comics, for instance, is Houston's own comic shop. There is an endless number of interesting things to look at in any Bedrock City located across our city.

Locally based and nationally recognized, Bedrock City is one of the most popular comic book shops in Bayou City. The first Bedrock City opened in 1990 and four more shops have opened ever since. As the years go by, Bedrock City customers keep growing. Of course, being a comic shop, they have the classic merchandise people automatically think of when they hear the words "comic shop." At Bedrock City, comics for people of all ages and tastes make up

most of the shop. There are comics of all genres; classic superhero ones, fantasy, horror, humor, and some more unconventional ones are some that can be found. And, they also have action figures for those who enjoy collecting.

Bedrock City's toy and statue section is incomparable, carries both domestic, and imported action figures. They also buy used action figures, because that is one way to earn some extra cash. After all, they have some of the most widely known action figure brands including S.H. Figuarts, Marvel Legends, Hot Toys, and more. Aside from the assembled action figures, there are also model kits for those who enjoy the challenge of building an action figure.

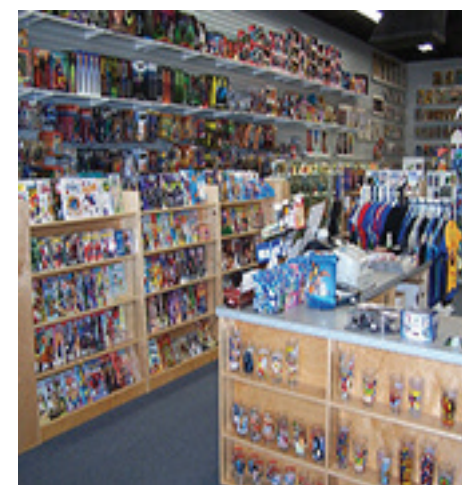
For those who may not be huge fans of comics or action figures, but still love superhero or pop culture novelties and paraphernalia, Bedrock City sells a diverse range of

t-shirts, backpacks, mugs and other drinkware, keychains, lanyards, coin banks, and so much more – and at reasonable prices too. A good thing about them is their merchandise is not just limited to superhero items, they also focus on other forms of pop culture such as anime, manga, TV shows, and movies. There is certainly something for everyone.

While Bedrock City has a great deal of items for sale, what makes it such a great place is its knowledgeable staff. They are friendly, customer-oriented people who love what they do and are always ready to help. Regardless of any concerns one might have, they have an answer – or if they don't, they will not hesitate to find one. They are more than happy to fill someone in on the story of a comic book character, help with pre-ordering an item, checking if they have an item in store, or whatever else it may be.

They even give customers suggestions and recommendations on what is popular or highly rated at the time.

It is an honor to be home to one of the best comic shops in the state. With one location close to campus on Washington Ave, UHD students should pay a visit and check out Bedrock City Comics.



Courtesy of Google Images

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A new perspective: Studying abroad opportunities at UHD

by Jaida Doll

University of Houston-Downtown recently hosted a study abroad fair to showcase national organizations and UHD faculty-led trips. The fair highlighted the benefits of studying abroad and information on how to sign up.

Studying abroad provides an excellent educational opportunity and exposure to a different country. In addition, it also encourages students' personal growth by challenging them to broaden the scope of their reality.

A student can choose from programs such as The Center for International Studies, University Studies Abroad Consortium, International Studies Abroad, American Institute for Foreign Study, and KEI Study Abroad. Many study abroad opportunities last for a semester or longer. While studying abroad can be an enriching experience, it can also be prohibitively expensive for a student.

As an alternative, UHD offers more affordable faculty led trips to many countries. These trips are often shorter than traditional study abroad programs but still offer many of the same benefits. Students take a semester long course at UHD. At the end of the semester, the class travels abroad with the faculty for a few days.

Over the summer, I had the opportunity to experience a faculty-led study abroad trip to England

and France with Dr. Diane Miller. The course focused on children's literature and was aimed at aspiring teachers. Guided by these countries' rich literary histories, our group explored the areas by touring authors' houses, visiting famous landmarks and experiencing cultural events.



Photo by Jaida Doll

Through studying abroad, I was able to better understand what I had learned in my classes because I could see it manifested in these other cultures. Dr. Miller explained, "you have these very authentic contexts to talk about your subject matter. For those who are going to become teachers, they've gained a worldview that they can bring into their classrooms where their students

may have a very limited scope of what they've seen and what they've experienced." Even outside of the educational and career benefits that study abroad experiences encompass, they also embody an opportunity for personal growth. She continues "... the first time, I didn't realize that I was planning the educational experiences—what relevant tours we were going to do and what things Mary [our tour guide in England] would cover in her talks with us. I was thinking like a teacher. I didn't realize all the inherent benefits—the deeper benefits like the flexibility of group travel, and trying to put other before yourself, and trying to work with the group...those were all kind of maturing experiences that I didn't think about."

The inspiration for this study came from a similar program at Texas A&M University. Dr. Miller presented the idea to Elizabeth Huskin, the assistant director of Study Abroad, hoping to extend this opportunity to UHD students. The first of Dr. Miller's trips was a gamble. The study abroad office was unsure of student interest as well as the price they would be able to pay for this experience. Dr. Miller says, "our demographics are different, I don't think our students typically have as much disposable income as A&M students do." However, UHD assists students with a desire to study

abroad. Most of the students on our Children's Literature Tour were granted a travel award.

For Dr. Miller, extending the accessibility of these programs at UHD is a passion, or as she calls it, "an active social justice." Dr. Miller explained the roots of this passion, "I grew up very privileged...My parents made sure I had the education I wanted, and they made sure I didn't have to make a lot of sacrifices, [and that] I didn't have to fight for my education the way I see some UHD students having to fight for theirs..." She aims to make the study abroad opportunity "an affordable possibility for students."

In the words of Dr. Miller "studying abroad is a really cool experience- just getting out of your comfort zone in another country. No matter where it is, it's a growing experience."

Appreciation should be given to not only Dr. Miller, but also to the Office of Study Abroad for making such valuable opportunities more accessible to UHD students. If you would like to find out more information about UHD's study abroad opportunities, visit the study abroad office at S345, check out the study abroad portal on UHD's website or email Elizabeth Huskin at study-abroad@uhd.edu.

Did you like what was said in the last issue of the paper? Did you not like something that was said? Do you want to add something extra to one of our stories? Then share that information with us and talk about it on our social media pages.

Start or contribute to the discussion on **Facebook @DatelineDowntown** or on **Instagram and Twitter @the_dateline**.

Get engaged with *Dateline: Downtown* today.

More than just a blunt: The maturity of marijuana

by Jaida Doll

7 Feature

Since its legalization in Colorado only 6 years ago, marijuana has incredibly increased the state's tourism and economy. The industry has created more than 210,000 jobs including growers, distributors, and sellers. In 2017 alone, Colorado's legal marijuana industry sold \$1.51 billion worth of product, about \$200 million of which was collected as taxes. These taxes have been funneled into the public school system, housing programs for the homeless, mental health programs for prisons and opioid addiction services.

Though states such as Colorado see an obvious benefit in marijuana legalization, the issue still has a long battle to fight in many states, including our own. This is not the first time the drug has battled its legal status; though originally criminalized in order to target Mexican migrants in the early 1900s, eleven states decriminalized marijuana possession between 1973 and 1977. This leniency is surprising considering America's policy at the time, when Nixon declared the war on drugs only a few years prior. From the time Nixon placed the drug into Schedule I, a negative stigma accompanied the drug even into present times. Though placed in the most serious and restrictive drug category at that time, cannabis encompasses a myriad of uses other than mere recreational ones.

The cannabis plant is more than just a blunt. Marijuana is only one variation of the cannabis plant, but it is what first comes to mind at the mention of the word "cannabis." Marijuana refers to the dried flowers of the female cannabis plant; it is the

variation of cannabis that one would roll into a blunt and smoke. Though it is most renowned for its recreational usage, it is also widely utilized for its medicinal benefits. This portion of the cannabis plant can also be grown and cared for so that the psychoactive component of the bud, THC, or tetrahydrocannabinol, is reduced and the purely medicinal component of the plant, or the CBD (cannabidiol), remains.

Though marijuana can be bred for the purely medicinal qualities, CBD and THC work best in combination with each other. When united, the cannabinoids can do much more than simply get you high. While also functioning as antioxidants, THC and CBD can relieve pain, nausea, and inflammation. Furthermore, some strains can act as a muscle relaxer, sleep aid, or even protect brain cells from the onset of Alzheimer's disease. These versatile medicinal qualities can be used to treat and manage a variety of ailments including scoliosis, Crohn's disease, indigestion, insomnia, muscle spasms, multiple sclerosis, arthritis, Parkinson's disease, as well as many others. This cannabinoid is also known to stimulate users' appetite and metabolism which could be used to treat anorexia or obesity, depending on the differing methods of treatment and coaching.

Additionally, the Food and Drug Administration has recently approved the first medication derived from cannabis, which is proven to reduce epileptic seizures by 54% in its users. Above all is marijuana's surprising effect on cancer patients. CBD has been shown to cease the

spread of cancer cells, while CBD and THC can slow and even shrink tumors. Lastly, not only can marijuana aid ailments of the body, but it has also been known to benefit users' mental health. Medicinal marijuana has been shown to reduce the symptoms of anxiety disorders, PTSD, depression, and even schizophrenia.



Hemp products at a Colorado Kroger. Photo by Jaida Doll

Outside of the recreational and even medicinal uses of marijuana, there are still many benefits within the plant itself. The male portion of the cannabis plant, which is commonly referred to as hemp can be used as fibers, building materials, or even types of fuel. This plant is completely non-psychoactive. Whereas medicinal marijuana can still contain small portions of THC, hemp is completely devoid of any psychoactive or drug-like properties. Every portion of the hemp plant from the seed to the stalk can be utilized for specific purposes. For instance, the seed of the hemp plant is miraculously nutritious; rich in fatty acids, vitamins, and protein, hemp seeds can aid weight loss, digestive health, and joint pain. Hemp

seeds can be purchased at the grocery store and can be eaten in salads, baked into breads, or turned milk and dairy products.

Aside from dietary health benefits, the oils from such seeds can treat skin disorders like eczema and psoriasis by reducing dryness. Additionally, it can promote a healthy heart, as well as lessen the symptoms of PMS, menopause, and mood disorders by balancing hormones. Hemp oil can even be turned into a biodiesel fuel. Hemp oil is often sold as is, but it can also be sold as a soap, lotion, or even a bubble bath. In addition to the seeds and oil of the hemp plant, the stalk has an even more versatile stretch of applications. It can be turned into rope, fiber, cotton, or wood, that is softer, stronger, and longer-lasting than the standard materials. It can even be turned into a fuel or an array of building materials. "Hempcrete" is one of these building materials that can be utilized to build houses, as it is a clean material insusceptible to mold, pests, and fire.

From building houses to curing cancer, the cannabis plant can benefit nearly any cause. Though the cannabis industry began in Colorado a mere six years ago, it is one that will continue to expand as the laws surrounding it do. As cannabis continues its battle to gain favor in the eyes of the public and the government, only more research will be conducted, and more benefits and uses of the plant will be discovered. Regardless of one's views surrounding marijuana usage, there is no argument that the cannabis plant is more than a blunt.

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Columns/ Creative Writing

The time-out corner: Crushing time demands on student parents

by Emily Christensen

Last month I began my third year at UHD while my son and daughter started their third year of elementary school. Already my six-year-old has advised me, “Mom, you spend too much time reading. You need to talk to outside people.” My notebook sums up the ordered chaos that is being a parent and a student. Notes on the Spanish subjunctive tense are tucked underneath my son’s drawings of robots that are next to grocery lists and reminders to bring back library books. It is shoved full of assignment prompts and field trip slips. Each semester, I survive with excessive caffeine and the flexibility of online classes.

Going to school while taking care of a family is undeniably busy. Everyone has their tips and tricks

to make it work. My favorite one is meal planning. I hate grocery shopping throughout the week, so I get it all done on Saturday and post a menu on the refrigerator. That saves me from having to make difficult decisions when we get home such as “do beets go well with tacos?” This makes our life way easier for about three or four weeks, then everything falls apart come midterms and we eat beans and cornbread nearly every day until I find time to make a list.

Twenty-five percent of undergraduate students in America have children. Twenty-five percent of students across the country decided to take on what amounts to two full time jobs (three if they also work). Twenty-five percent of students are no doubt functioning on too little

sleep. There are thousands of UHD students balancing some variation of the same things- classes, packing lunches, parent/teacher meetings, due dates, laundry, story time, paying bills, homework...and on and on.

Students with children are at higher risk for not completing their degree. According to the Institute for Women’s Policy Research, there are simply not enough hours in the day because students “operate under often crushing time demands”. Something has to give and frequently that is any semblance of personal time or a full night’s sleep.

Children are more likely to get a degree themselves if they have a parent with a degree. These children that watch their parent finish school have an even higher advan-

tage. They have sat quietly through their mom’s tutoring sessions or watched their dad finish homework during breakfast or missed out on playdates because a research paper is due that night. The children of the twenty-five percent have a more accurate idea of what it takes to actually succeed in college.

This semester I’ll be exploring some of the things that affect student parents. Let us know what you think, ask us a question, or share some of your experiences. In the meantime, I will be finishing up essays while waiting in the pickup line at school, staying up hours after bedtime to take a test in peace, and taking phone calls from a child in the principal’s office in between classes.

My battle for silence part 1

by Ashley Medrano

Did you take your medication?
Did you take your medicine?
¿Ya tomaste tu medicina?
Have you taken your medicine?
¿Te tomaste la medicina?
“Yees!”

Fake your exasperation. Now, smile, smile, smile, laugh, and shake your head.

No, I have not taken my medication in 17 days.

Silence is all I have ever wanted, but they say it is not normal.

A few months ago when I was feeling like I just needed some alone time, I repeatedly banged my head on the walls of the second floor of my house. Then, I slapped myself

over and over because I knew people would think I looked crazy and I wanted to stop. Finally, I climbed on the edge of the second floor and looked at the ground floor below. I was no longer able to see the floor beneath me because water blurred my vision. My tears, but I wasn’t scared of the fall, no, I was pissed off at myself. Why did I choose now to jump when my brother was downstairs?

If I were to jump, I knew I wouldn’t have died unless I hit the pointy end of the stairs, but I probably would have missed.

So, my family grabbed me and shoved me into the back seat of the small black CR-V and my

brother-in-law sat with me. They felt that he was strong enough to hold me against my will. But my head was attracted to the sturdiness of walls and comforted by the possible misfortune of receiving a fatal head injury, so I charged my head into the window. He used both his hands to grab my head, but my head felt lonely and my hands were available, so I punched myself.

As I sat in the waiting room at the ER with my brother-in-law, I looked around to see people trembling, coughing, and crying. My tears were already dried and the only evidence of my battle for silence was my hair. It molded perfectly around

the shape of my mind: twirls, tangles, and the empty spaces between. I was tired and wanted to be consumed into nothingness, but I heard the stare of someone, so I looked up. A male nurse in his thirties called me to the back room to be examined as my sister and mother stood behind him. After he performed his standard testing and questions, he asked me the one subject my family had been anticipating. “Are you suicidal?” My mouth twitched and produced a slant shaped laugh.

It's football time in Houston: A preview of the Houston Texans 2018 season

by Michael Case

Houston Texans defensive star JJ Watt's slogan is "Dream big, work hard." Well the 2018 Houston Texans dream big. Few times in Texans history has the team gone into a season with confidence in their quarterback, but never this much confidence. Former Texans quarterback, Matt Schaub, had multiple good seasons in Houston, even leading the league in passing yards in 2009 with 4,770 yards. When Schaub fell, he fell hard, breaking the NFL record for interception returns for a touchdown, a record no Texan fan forgets. The current quarterback, Deshaun Watson, gives hope to every Texans fan. His six and half game display last season showed the entire league what he was capable of doing. With Watson in the game, the Texans averaged over 30 points a game; it fell to under 15 with Tom Savage leading the offense.

The 2017 Texans were littered with injuries. From the top on down, Watson being injured was one of the most important, though the defense was stripped of two of its three best players in Watt and Whitney Mercilus. Many depth players were also lost due to injury; good young

talent, like D'onta Foreman and Christian Covington were also lost for the season by week 8. The Texans only won four games in 2017, with a first-place division schedule and over twenty players on IR (injured reserve), it's not surprising to see that number. However, the 2018 Texans could impress many this year if they stay healthy, however, that is a huge IF.

The injured positions on the Texans last year would ruin any team. The starting quarterback, Watson, who looks to be a franchise player, was lost before the eighth game. Watt, one of the best defensive players in the league when healthy, was coming off back surgery when he broke his leg. Mercilus was lost a few plays later, a solid linebacker and leader on the team. The Texans also added big name free agent Tyrann Mathieu, also known as the Honey Badger, was signed along with ex-Jaguars cornerback Aaron Colin. Defensive end/linebacker JD Clowney showed he was worth a number one pick after his play last year. All these stars, if healthy, can play extremely well with their counterparts.

On the offensive side of the ball, Deandre Hopkins and Will Fuller look to be an excellent wide receiver tandem, again if Fuller can stay healthy. Watson has great chemistry with both receivers, and the offense added two big targets in the draft, signing two tight ends. The offensive line has been completely revamped, returning linemen Nick Martin and Greg Mancz, but bringing in multiple rookies and free agents to help Watson and the running back Lamar Miller get those extra yards. The Texans are not short on stars, but those stars need to stay healthy if this team is going to make a playoff run.

The Texans former General Manager (GM), Rick Smith, had to step back from football for personal reasons, but new GM Brian Gaines took his place and is starting to make his mark. Gaines made the big signings of Mathieu and Colvin, as well as cleaning house of the pool offensive line play. He cut future Hall of Fame punter, Shane Lechler, a tough cut but a necessary one given that Lechler is 42. The veteran fullback, Jay Prosch was cut as well, a significant cut as the Texans were one of the few NFL teams to have an active

roster spot dedicated to that position, but no longer. The idea of a run-first, smash-mouth offense, first started with previous coach Gary Kubiak. The Texans now have Watson, and they are looking to change that old-school attitude into a new, more electric offense.

The Texans look to improve off last year's four-win team with a similar roster to last year's roster, only this time, they want to stay healthy. That word is vital to the Texans 2018 season. The team is realistically a year or two away from winning a Super Bowl. The playoffs are not out of the question. In a weak conference, the Texans only true threats are the New England Patriots, the Pittsburgh Steelers, and the Jacksonville Jaguars. If the Texans stars can stay injury-free, this team could win 10-12 games with a weaker schedule this season. If more of the same happens to the Texans, Coach Bill O'Brien could be shown the exit. And Texans fans will say what they do every season, "There's always next year."

Serious comedy: A review of "Nanette"

by Helen Martinez

I was not sure what to expect when I sat down to watch Hannah Gadsby's Netflix comedy special, "Nanette". The only information I had to go off of was a friend recommending it as social commentary on LGBT issues and mentioning a vague warning about violence and sexual assault. In a way, I suppose, I was prepared for a sad story despite it being comedy; it was so much more. While Gadsby's story should not be overlooked, not the least because it is a major motivation for this show, "Nanette" is more complicated than is initially seen. It delves into the plight of comedy, the consequences of minorities using self-deprecation as a career, and the effort it takes to break free from the cycle of validation and humiliation.

I will be the first to say that I know nothing of comedy. My experience with stand-up consists of listening to John Mulaney and Trevor Noah comedy specials while doing homework. I do not claim to be an expert in any shape or form on comedy. That being said, Gadsby's "Nanette" is such smart stand-up that chooses to be emotional rather than escapism. She is aware and introspective, which makes her show even more clever and thought-provoking. However, this means that those who

do go to her show seeking a brief respite from their lives through easy jokes and a relaxed atmosphere might be disappointed. After all, I imagine typical standup does not include the comedian using her degree in art history to explain why she hates Picasso and why Vincent van Gogh's bright yellow sunflowers might be a result of medication for his mental illness. Gadsby does use what she calls "classic lesbian content" in order to appeal to her audience, as well as, said in her own words "her people, the gays." Beyond that, she also manages to deconstruct comedy, or at least comedy as she performs it, and define the bare essentials in order to reveal how she has used comedy and how it has used her. She is aware that it is her job to make people laugh by creating and releasing tension in a room, and, as she says, she's very good at it. She describes the structure of comedy as an abusive relationship in which she inseminates tension in order to relieve it. However, in the process of relieving tension, she is also reliving the trauma she says is necessary for her to create the tension. As she said it, "punchlines need trauma because punchlines need tension and tension feeds trauma." She describes how her story of trauma has become warped to suit

the comedic formula of tension and punchline at the expense of her own stability. She is aware of the toll it is taking on herself, and this is where her show takes a turn.

To be clear, this is not a show for the casual viewer. It is not for the easily offended, not for those triggered by mentions of violence, nor sexual assault, nor for those sensitive about sexual abuse. From the start, Gadsby is not afraid to let her audience feel uncomfortable with the revelation of trauma as a tool in comedy, and she handles it with precise control. She is experienced with diffusing tensions, because she says that she as a "not-normal" is tension. She has had her whole life to deal with what she allows us to briefly feel for that hour, and we all feel her rage. Towards the end, she tells the true story behind a couple of her earlier jokes, showing how comedy does not allow the full story. Because comedy requires only the set-up and the punchline. Tension and release. There is no room for endings. This realization is what motivated Gadsby to tell her story "properly" because she said, "you learn from the part of the story you learn from." She does what we all must do at one point or another in our lives, and that is taking a step back to reevaluate. Reassess

our values and our actions as well as the consequences of those actions. She said that self-deprecative humor when one is a minority "is not humility; it's humiliation." Constantly putting herself down was only adding to the shame she felt she deserved inside. She was hurting herself and preventing herself from healing, so she decided to make a change and use her platform to say enough.

"Nanette" was supposed to be her last show. She reveals this not even 20 minutes into the show. Her tiredness is obvious in her voice and eyes, but there is the possibility that she is joking. It is a ploy to make people stay riveted. By the end, no one doubts that she means it. While Gadsby's future in comedy is somewhat uncertain now and there is no doubt about the recognition and acclaim for "Nanette", I believe Hannah Gadsby deserves a break. Perhaps one of the naps she seems so fond of. She has told her story. She has even made us laugh along the way. Let her have some quiet disturbed only by her favorite noise: the sound of a teacup finding its spot on its saucer.

Church bells and nuns from hell: A Preview of "The Nun"

by Lissette Perez



As the month of August leaves, we prepare to welcome the fall season brought on by September. The beginning of autumn not only means falling leaves and pumpkin spice everything, but it also means it is time to start preparing for one of the most awaited horror movies in history – “The Nun”. This movie will be releasing in September 7, 2018, and has been in the making since the success of “The Conjuring 2” in June 2016. There is no doubt that this film will be well received by audiences all around the world wanting to get a

good scare.

“The Conjuring” Universe is a horror movie franchise dedicated to the supernatural cases investigated by renowned paranormal investigators and demonologists, Ed and Lorraine Warren. It began with two major films, “The Conjuring” and “The Conjuring 2”, which were based on true events. Director James Wan saw the potential of creating an entire universe during the making of “The Conjuring.” This potential only increased after the film’s ratings were exceptionally high.

“The Conjuring”, released in 2013, was the movie that started it all. It brought the Warren couple to light. This movie follows the Warrens as they investigate the home of the Perron family located in Harrisville, Rhode Island. The Perrons had experienced strange happenings which lead them to contact the famous Warrens, whom had recently investigated one of the most notorious and controversial haunting cases in U.S. history to this day – the Amityville haunting. The movie led to an equally successful sequel, “The Conjuring

2.”

It was not until the second Conjuring movie that the character of the nun was introduced. In “The Conjuring 2”, the Warrens travel to Enfield, London to investigate poltergeist activity at the house of single mother, Peggy Hodgson. Hodgson’s daughter, Janet, begins acting strange. The story eventually reaches the medial; Ed and Lorraine work alongside the church to determine whether the strange occurrences were caused by a real demonic possession. They soon discover that Janet was being used as a vessel for Valak, a demonic nun Ed had a vision of earlier, to enter the real world. Audiences enjoyed the character, even James Wan himself said “people really loved the Nun character.” So, then “The Nun” project began.

“The Nun” is a prequel to all the Conjuring Universe movies, including “Annabelle” and “Annabelle: Creation.” The movie will cover the origin story of the demonic entity that was encountered in the Hodgson residence. Although “The Nun” is based on a myth, it is expected to be

just as frightening as the others. Set decades ago in a Romanian monastery, the Vatican sends a priest and a novitiate to investigate a nun’s suicide. The two will endanger their lives in order to discover the truth but will be met with an immensely evil entity.

Whether viewers have kept up with “The Conjuring” movies or not, this movie will undoubtedly leave those who dare watch it on the edge of their seats. Get ready to hit the nearest movie theater this weekend and experience one of the most anticipated horror movies of the year. Did this movie meet your horror expectations? Let us know on any of our social media platforms.

Making a run to the store: Houston clothing store supports revolutionary shopping app

by Archie Gayle

On Friday, Aug. 24 at 9p.m., Options Trading Company hosted an opening party for a revolutionary app called Mall Run, a shopping app for Apple and Android devices; it’s like UberEATS, but for clothing and beauty items—you select your city and choose the store you want to order clothes/items from, and a delivery driver will deliver it to you. It’s fitting that such an innovative app would host its opening party at such an innovative venue.

The first thing I noticed when I entered the Mall Run opening party was the vibe. Vintage clothing, supplied by Mall Run, was lined up from corner to corner. Above the clothing were vintage posters on every wall; these included an image of O.J. Simpson trying on the famous black gloves in his infamous 1995 murder case; an image of Bobby Brown and Whitney Houston at the 2001 Red Carpet, with Bob-

by’s extended tongue about to meet Whitney’s neck; and Beyoncé posing in a bright yellow swimsuit, wearing a sash that reads “Miss 3rd Ward.” Lil Baby, Quavo, and YG filled the air, accompanied by bass, synths, and snares.

Options Trading Company was started in 2013 by brothers Lando and Keaton Singleton and their colleague Whitney—the latter of whom owns the clothing line, Wardrobe by Whitney. All three of the owners are in their early twenties. The business originally operated near Texas Southern University in front of their home; two years ago, they moved to their current location at 4212 Emancipation Ave. While the vibe of Options screams “modern,” many components of the establishment are from previous generations—such as the vintage clothing, the posters, and rock & roll books on the shelves and tables. One gets

a feeling of black history and where the vibe of the store comes from. “It’s definitely intentional,” says Whitney. “It’s our style—our own twist to it. We like that aesthetic. We like for people to have those references. Cause there’s a lot of people in our age group who don’t know these people. They don’t know about Tina Turner, Whitney Houston, or Janet [Jackson]. Even the movies,” she said, gesturing to a poster of Spike Lee’s Do the Right Thing hanging on the wall. “Many kids haven’t seen those movies. So, we like to have these references. That way, they see why we style the way we style.” Options obtains their vintage clothing from all around the world. “People sell them to us,” says Whitney. “Or we search for them. We call it ‘picking cotton.’”

Options is just one of the stores available on Mall Run. Shisty Clothing, For the Leaux, and Wander

Houston are some other Houston clothing stores that are available on the app. Mall Run also delivers hair products, beauty supplies, and shoes. This service is available in both Houston and San Antonio. In addition to delivering clothing and items from local stores, Mall Run has a custom delivery feature for all stores that aren’t explicitly listed. They will travel to any mall or store in Houston, obtain the desired item, and deliver it to your doorstep. All deliveries typically take one hour or less; one doesn’t have to wait the dreaded five-to-seven business days to look good anymore. “We’re going to revolutionize the way people shop,” says Jerel Jones, the founder and CEO of Mall Run.

CLASSROOMS ARE FOR LEARNING
***NOT HIDING
FROM GUNFIRE***

TIME AND TIME AGAIN, STUDENTS HAVE
DEMONSTRATED THAT WE WILL SHOW UP TO END
GUN VIOLENCE. WE CAN HELP CHANGE GUN LAWS
AND THE LAWMAKERS WHO DECIDE THEM.

IT'S TIME TO BE A

***GUN SENSE
VOTER***

REGISTER TO VOTE AT
EVERYTOWN.ORG/REGISTER


**STUDENTS
DEMAND
ACTION**
FOR GUN SENSE IN AMERICA

PAID FOR BY EVERYTOWN FOR GUN SAFETY ACTION FUND.