

# UHD DATEDATELINE

Student Run Since  
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**In This Issue.....**  
 News.....2  
 Gator Life.....5  
 Arts and Entertainment....10



**Can Sanders reverse the War on Drugs?**  
see News, Page 4



**Former Astro to coach UHD baseball**  
see Gator Life, Page 5



**New Wellness and Success Center coming soon to UHD**  
see Gator Life, Page 6-7



**Food trucks on campus**  
see Gator Life, Page 8

## Pandemic reaches Houston

By Lauren Anderson

At least 166 people have been affected by COVID-19 in the Houston area.

World Health Organization (WHO) has officially declared this virus as a pandemic, as it is a worldwide issue. Despite it being categorized as a pandemic, WHO states that there is no need for panic, as they are assessing and gaining knowledge of the virus. They have

**“All countries can still change the course of this pandemic.”**  
- WHO Director-General

also stated that countries have demonstrated that it is possible to suppress and control the virus. However, it is still of concern, as there is a lack of action in preventing the spread of the virus.

“We cannot say this loudly enough, or often enough: All countries can still change the course of this pandemic,” said WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus.

Many major Houston events have been cancelled because of the

spread of the disease. One of these events was the International Energy Conference. Usually about 5,000 people attend and delegates from over 80 countries meet at the event, but this year Houston will lose millions of dollars due to the cancellation of the conference that could have created opportunities for business in Houston.

However, Mayor Sylvester Turner stated that the safety and health of Houstonians is more important than the loss of money.

“We, of course, would be losing about a minimum of 5,400 hotel nights because the conference will not be taking place,” he said. “So it will hurt us economically but lives over money.”

The Houston Rodeo was another major

event that suffered due to the spread of the virus. The city of Houston and the Houston Health Department ordered for the Rodeo to close for the first time in the 88 years that it has existed.

The Rodeo has an estimated \$227 million impact on Houston’s economy annually. The decision to cancel the Houston Rodeo came about in reaction to the emergency health declaration signed by Turner on March 11.

On March 16, Turner called an emergency city council meeting and extended that declaration.

Though many of Houston’s events, bars, and social activities have suffered due to the spread of COVID-19, it is important to keep in mind that these are necessary pre-

cautions to limit the spread of the disease. As Turner said, health and safety concerns take priority over

**“Lives over money.”**  
- Mayor Sylvester Turner

entertainment and economy.

COVID-19 is a respiratory illness that can spread from person to person. The first signs of this disease were identified in Wuhan, China. The symptoms are shortness of breath, fever, and cough.

The ways to prevent yourself from getting this disease are washing your hands regularly, avoiding contact with those who seem sick, and avoiding touching your eyes, mouth, and nose.

However, if you do get sick, contact your healthcare provider for instructions on your next steps in healing from the virus.

It is imperative that these guidelines are followed as COVID-19 continues to spread.



Mayor Sylvester Turner speaks about the threat of COVID-19 in emergency city council meeting. Image courtesy of Houston Chronicle.



Image courtesy of Oaklawn Hospital





## THE DATELINE

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The Dateline has been the official student newspaper of the University of Houston-Downtown since 1982, and it has been "Student Run since Volume One". We strive to meet the needs of a growing university as well as the growing metropolitan city that surrounds us.

The newspaper is published bi-weekly, every other Monday, as well as over the Summer break.

Print circulation is 1,000 copies per issue and distributed to all college buildings throughout the University, as well as satellite campuses at UHD-Northwest.

Deadlines for contributions are one week before publication date. Contact the Editor for more information.

### Submission Policy

The Dateline staff consists of students from the University of Houston-Downtown who complete all tasks required to produce the newspaper, which serves the main UHD campus, and satellite campuses at UHD-Northwest. We want all students, regardless of major, to contribute. However, we must comply with our submission policy to operate under our limitations of time, energy, and staff.

The opinions and commentaries expressed within reflect the views of the contributing writers. No opinions expressed in The Dateline reflect the viewpoints of the University of Houston-Downtown, its administration, or students.

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 staff and contributing writers must be currently enrolled students at the University of Houston-Downtown. The Dateline interacts with contributing writers via messaging, phone and/or email.

Press releases, story ideas, news tips and suggestions are always welcomed.

Any student interested in joining The Dateline staff may request more detailed information sending an email to the editors at [editordatelinedowntown@gmail.com](mailto:editordatelinedowntown@gmail.com).

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# MLB cracks down on cheating

By Lauren Anderson

On Jan. 13, it was revealed that the Astros illegally used a camera system to steal signs during both the 2017 and 2018 seasons.

Signs are the hand signals that the catcher gives to the pitcher that tells the pitcher what type of throw to use. If the pitcher disagrees, they will shake their head.

The Astros cheated by using a camera system to see and steal the signs of other teams. Managers get one chance to challenge a call on the

a smartwatch of a staff member or a smartphone in the dugout. The coach eventually installed a television outside the dugout showing the center-field camera feed on it. The players then would bang on a trash can to signal to the batter when there is going to be a curveball or an off-speed pitch.

Many other teams are furious with the idea that the Astros players will not be disciplined and want to take matters into their own hands.

For example,

players, seven coaches, and necessary interpreters and trainers will be allowed inside the dugout. This modification will prevent access to front-office personnel, which was the issue with the Astros.

Furthermore, the MLB is infringing other rules and restrictions to complicate and hopefully eradicate cheating. Some of these new rules so far are new limits on dugout access, limiting television and phone use during games and banning "engineered" substances on

doctored balls. These engineered substances, also reportedly used by the Astros, increase the spin rate on the pitches. Rather than just providing a grip on the ball, engineered substances allow for increased speed and spin that is above the pitcher's natural skill. Therefore, the MLB will



Houston Astros celebrate their 2017 World Series "win." Image courtesy of Deadline

field with the use of video replay systems. Each team has a video replay review room.

Investigators stated that the Astros used the center-field camera feed to steal opponents' signs. One of the Astros players would go back and forth to relay the signs to teammates in the dugout and eventually to the batter. In some cases, the coach would call the review room to get signs, or send a text message to either

Dodgers pitcher, Alex Wood said, "Somebody will take it into their own hands, and they'll get suspended for more games than any of those guys got for the biggest cheating scandal in 100 years. It'll be pretty ironic when that happens because I'm sure that's how it will end up playing out."

The scandal was made possible because too many people had too much access to the dugout and clubhouse, so now only

no longer allow teams to doctor balls with foreign substances.

Yet without disciplinary measures reaching the Astros, many fans are left wondering, will these new rules be enough to prevent cheating in America's favorite pastime?



Houston Astros celebrate their stolen trophy Image courtesy of USA Today



Houston Astros parade through downtown Houston following the 2017 World Series. Image courtesy of USA Today



# Harvey Weinstein trial marks a new era of justice

By Katelyn Houser

On Feb. 24, 2019, the now-infamous film producer, Harvey Weinstein was found guilty of third-degree rape and first-degree criminal sexual assault.

Although he was found guilty of two counts brought against him, he was acquitted of one charge of first-degree rape and two counts of predatory sexual assault, which would have given him a life sentence.

Despite this, Weinstein's victims

rejoiced that he was finally found guilty of his actions. Other actors and actresses expressed gratitude to the brave survivors who spoke out against Weinstein and expressed hope that such courage will help other victims of similar crimes to speak up against behavior like Weinstein's.

The five-day trial at the Manhattan Criminal Courts Building followed a stressful series of jurors, who narrowly focused on

whether or not Weinstein had broken the law during the time the incidents occurred. The jurors were aware of the trial's significance to the #MeToo movement, but they managed to remain focused on the evidence.

In 2017, more than 80 women went public accusing Weinstein of sexual harassment and assault as revealed in *The New York Times* and *The New Yorker*, setting the #MeToo movement into

motion.

The charges were based on testimonies from Miriam Haley, Jessica Mann, and Annabella Sciorra. Haley testified that Weinstein forcibly performed oral sex on her in 2006 at his Manhattan apartment.

Mann testified that he raped her in 2013 during what she described as an abusive relationship.

Sciorra testified that sometime in the early 1990s, Weinstein

gave her a ride home, and used the opportunity to barge his way into her Gramercy Park apartment and rape her.

On March 11, 2020, Weinstein was sentenced to 23 years in prison with five years of supervision after release. Weinstein must also register as a sex offender, proceeding his release.

His defense attorneys tried to secure only 5 years for Weinstein, arguing his lack of previous criminal

history and the fact that his life is now ruined, regardless of a prison sentence.

The jurors, however, disagreed and sentenced Weinstein to 23 years in prison.

"Let us be free," tweeted actress, Rose McGowan, one of many Weinstein's victims, the day he was sentenced.

She continued, "Today we exhale."

# Bernie Sanders rallies Houston

By Sheryl Sellers

On Feb. 23, Democratic Presidential Candidate and self-proclaimed Democratic Socialist, Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-VT) held a rally in Houston. Hosted by the University of Houston, it assembled a broad coalition of supporters, ranging from college students to older people.

Ironically, Sanders held the event at the Fertitta Center, a venue named after one of Houston's prominent billionaires, despite his staunch disdain of billionaires and "elite" individuals. It seems that a billionaire can buy the naming rights to a building, but they

cannot prevent keeping its naysayers from using its establishment.

Inside the Fertitta Center, brightly lit electronic billboards encircled the space, blazed with the words "Not Me, Us," along with handheld "Bernie" placards placed on every seat. The rally-attendees were an electrified, diverse coalition, united together for one cause—electing a progressive, Democratic agenda.

Chants of "Bernie, Bernie, Bernie" resonated from the walls and ceiling, in addition to the "boos" aimed at the current administration. Throughout the

rally, Sanders further articulated his platform, denouncing gun violence and explaining his ideals to outlaw assault weapons for personal use.

Additionally, Sanders reinstated the need for universal healthcare, tuition, and a government that serves the needs of all Americans. Sanders also mentioned the corrupt practices of the current administration, detailing its falsehoods and an unwillingness to compromise, showing a desire for personal loyalty over the country's interests.

The news media have stated the

importance of young voters (i.e., college students), as they make up a crucial voting block this election season. In addition, Sanders will have to motivate these young voters, as well as others, that usually abstain from voting. In order to win this election, he must prove to them that he is worthy of their vote.

It is crucial to participate in one's community, whether it be volunteering or assisting others. In addition, it is also important to vote for a candidate that serves your best interests. Change can be accomplished one step at a time, but one must

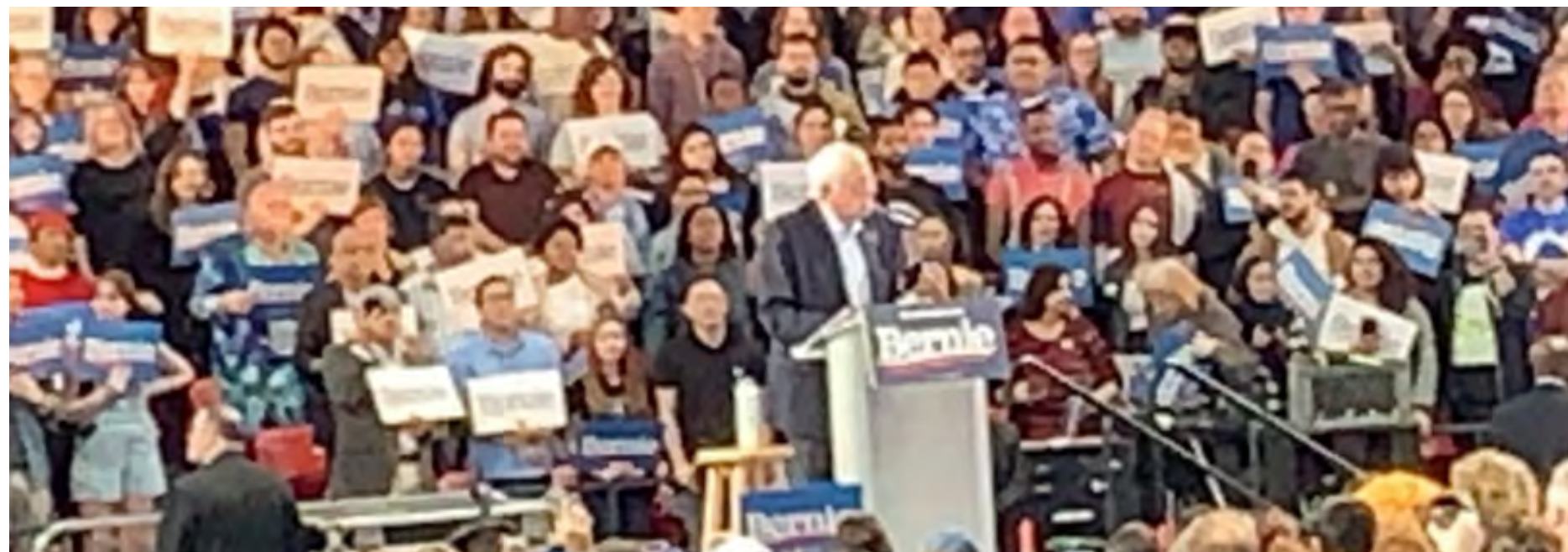


The crowd awaiting Sen. Sanders. Photo credit: Aansa Usmani

take the first step – by voting.

For additional questions regarding voting, visit your county's

website for information.



Sen. Bernie Sanders addresses the crowd at his Houston Rally. Photo credit: Aansa Usmani



# Can Bernie Sanders reverse the War on Drugs?

By Jaida Doll

During the South Carolina primary debate on Feb. 25 Sen. Bernie Sanders explained his goals to legalize marijuana and expunge marijuana-related criminal records. This is a high priority issue for Sanders, as he hopes to legalize the drug on his first day in the Oval Office.

This issue of legalization was sparked when one of the debate moderates asked Sen. Amy Klobuchar if Sanders' plan to legalize and expunge records is realistic enough. Though Sanders has no doubts he can federally legalize marijuana by executive action on his first day as president, Klobuchar disagreed.

"Well, it is realistic to want to legalize marijuana. I want to do that too..." she explained, "You maybe can't do it on day one, like [Sanders] said."

Klobuchar continues to compare the hurriedness of Sanders' idea to her plans to thoroughly review records before expunging charges as well as providing medical treatments for those struggling with addiction.

Though Sanders' plan seems rushed in comparison to Klobuchar's, Sanders responded by clarifying the details of his plan.

He stated that marijuana will be federally legalized and that he will begin the process of expunging criminal records associated with marijuana charges on his first day in office.

"What we are going to do is, move to expunge the records of those people arrested for the possession of

allowing for the strictest prison sentences for those charged with drug-related crimes. This category was reserved for drugs with a high risk of addiction and little evidence of medical benefits.

Placing marijuana into this category not only refuses to acknowledge its medicinal

marijuana was placed in such a category in the first place: racism.

"We have a criminal justice system today that is not only broken, it is racist." When Nixon initiated the War on Drugs, he chose to place marijuana into the most dangerous category of drugs, not because the drug itself was dangerous, but because he believed the people who used the drug were dangerous.

In a 1994 interview, Nixon's domestic policy chief, John Ehrlichman that the biggest enemies to Nixon's campaign were "the antiwar left and black people". He continues to explain Nixon's reasoning for classifying the drug so strictly as well as the tactics he used to target minorities under the coverage of a War on Drugs.

Ehrlichman stated, "We knew we couldn't make it illegal to be either against the war or black, but by getting the public to associate the hippies with marijuana and blacks with heroin, and then criminalizing both heavily, we could disrupt those communities. We could arrest their leaders, raid their homes, break up their meetings, and vilify them night after

night on the evening news. Did we know we were lying about the drugs? Of course, we did."

Sanders explains the result of this War on Drugs.

"We've got more people in jail than any other country on earth... One of the reasons for that is a horrific War on Drugs." Sanders' website explains that it is not only the number of people in jail that is concerning, but also the color of those jail.

"African Americans are nearly four times as likely to be arrested for marijuana possession than white Americans even though

his plan aims to help minority communities build legal marijuana businesses and "ensure that revenue from legal marijuana is reinvested in communities hit hardest by the War on Drugs, especially African-American and other communities of color."

This way, those who were most affected by the War on Drugs, can now profit from those same drugs for which they were targeted and arrested.

Sanders' website continues, "It is time to admit the criminalization of marijuana was a disaster, especially for communities of color, and allow those most impacted to move forward with their lives. Our job now is to

**"We have a criminal justice system today that is not only broken, it is racist."  
- Sen. Bernie Sanders**

marijuana."

In order to accomplish this, Sanders plans to remove marijuana from the Federal Control Substance Act, signed into effect by President Richard Nixon in 1970. This act marked the beginning the War on Drugs, a government initiative to decrease drug use by implementing strict prison sentences for possession, use, and distribution of illegal drugs.

The Federal Control Substance Act placed marijuana into the most dangerous category of illegal drugs,

benefits, but even goes so far as to equate the drug with heroin.

"That's insane!" Sanders said during the debate, regarding marijuana's categorization and its equation to heroin.

And Sanders is right. It is insane. Although there is abundant proof of marijuana's extensive medicinal benefits, the drug has remained in the most dangerous (and most judicially targeted) category of drugs since the Federal Control Substance Act was put into play in the 1970s. Sanders explained why

**"We've got more people in jail than any other country on earth... One of the reasons for that is a horrific War on Drugs."  
- Sen. Bernie Sanders**

people in this country use marijuana at roughly the same rates across all races."

Sanders' plan to remove marijuana from the Federal Control Substance Act, effectively ends this war on race that is parading under the guise of a war on drugs. But Sanders goes even a step farther to make reparations for those affected by the War on Drugs.

"We are going to provide help to the African-American, Latino, Native American communities to start businesses to start legal marijuana, rather than let a few corporations control the legalized marijuana market."

Sanders' website explains that

legalize marijuana and vacate and expunge past marijuana convictions, and ensure that revenue from legal marijuana is reinvested in communities hit hardest by the War on Drugs."

By removing the drug from the Federal Substance Control Act, Sanders allows the medicinal benefits of marijuana recognized and utilized, but Sanders' plan does so much more than that. By aiding minority communities in creating legal marijuana businesses, Bernie Sanders' marijuana legalization plan attempts to make amends for fifty years of racism by effectively reversing Nixon's War on Drugs.



Image courtesy of GreenCamp



# Faculty Senate meeting highlights campus safety, coronavirus and SGA request

By Sheryl Sellers

The March 3 Faculty Senate meeting was called to order at approximately 2:30 p.m. in the Milam/Travis room. It began with an affirmative passing of the minutes of the previous meeting.

The meeting's agenda included campus safety, planning regarding the coronavirus and a request of the Student Government Association (SGA).

Among the visitors were Senior Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs and Provost, Eric Carl Link, Ph.D., SGA President, She-naedra "Shay" Tatu, Vice President, Jason Lillie and several members of the SGA.

Meritza Tamez, Ph.D, Interim Dean of Students/Assistant Dean of Students, Student Affairs

was the first to address the senate. She distributed information cards and inserts for faculty lanyards which describe steps to take in the event of a student threat. The material included phone numbers, a chart of actions to take and pertinent points provided by the Houston Police Department.

A flow chart on measures to take regarding issues involving Title IV was also made available.

When questioned about making students aware of the consequences, Tamez replied that students are aware of implications involving threats via a class syllabus, first day orientation and in addition electronic copies of the guidelines are available.

Next on the

agenda was Stacie DeFreitas, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Psychology, Assistant Chair, Social Science Department who focused on sustainability changes across UHD and the sustainability Mission Statement.

Sandra Jacobson, Manager Annual Giving, addressed the senate on the Give to Gators initiative. Donations to the fundraiser support students in various ways including scholarships and the Food for Change program. She emphasized that donations are not required but are appreciated.

Having returned from the spring Texas Council of Faculty Senate Meeting Dr. Ron Beebe, Professor Urban Education, disclosed that according to the

American Association of University Professors, all campuses should include a Faculty Senate. He further announced that the UHD Faculty Senate is one of the most supportive senates in Texas.

Members of the SGA addressed the senate concerning the association's desire to attend shared governance committee meetings, particularly those involving hiring professors at UHD. They maintained that the diversity of faculty does not match the student population. This was acknowledged by senate members. It was further noted that 60 percent of color diversity is observed in staff, but not in faculty.

SGA requested that a student leader be placed on the search committee and be involved in the

decision process. The conversation from senate members entailed the difficulty in hiring a demographic other than "white male" in certain disciplines where another qualified applicant could not be found. Senate members assured the association that there is not a conspiracy to hire certain-looking people. Also noted, was the process involved within the constraints of the senate to include student leaders in a voting position.

The senate remarked that a critical audit of the hiring practice needs to be looked at, for instance, how and where ads for faculty openings are sent. Acknowledging the problem of diversity in professorship, the senate has been in the preliminary stages of discerning the necessary steps to find and acquire a

more diverse faculty. Members of the SGA were grateful that steps are being taken in this area.

The senate thanked SGA for their attendance and expressed that they are impressed that the group wanted to have their voices heard. A continuation of operations plan is in the draft stage. A focus is on those available to work offsite should the necessity present itself. Eighty percent of the plan needs to be in place now in lieu of the coronavirus and 20 percent later in case of a hurricane. Travel restrictions and possible students traveling abroad over spring break were acknowledged as possible concerns of the spread of the coronavirus.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 4:00 p.m.

# Former MLB pitcher, now coach of UHD baseball club

By Anthony Raul Ramirez

Scipio Spinks was hired this semester as a UHD baseball club coach. He began practices with the UHD team in February.

Spinks held a career with MLB from the late 1960s to early 1970s. The Astros drafted him in 1969 after seeing an exceptional track record of good performances in the minor leagues – like when he struck out twenty batters in one game for the Northern League.

He moved to

Houston where he played on the Astros until being traded to the St. Louis Cardinals in 1972.

With his new team, the Cardinals, Spinks managed to set his career's record when he made a whopping 93 strikeouts in a year. Spinks played 16 games that year and allowed only 5 homeruns by the opposing team.

However, 1972 was also the time of a serious turn in Spink's baseball career longevity.

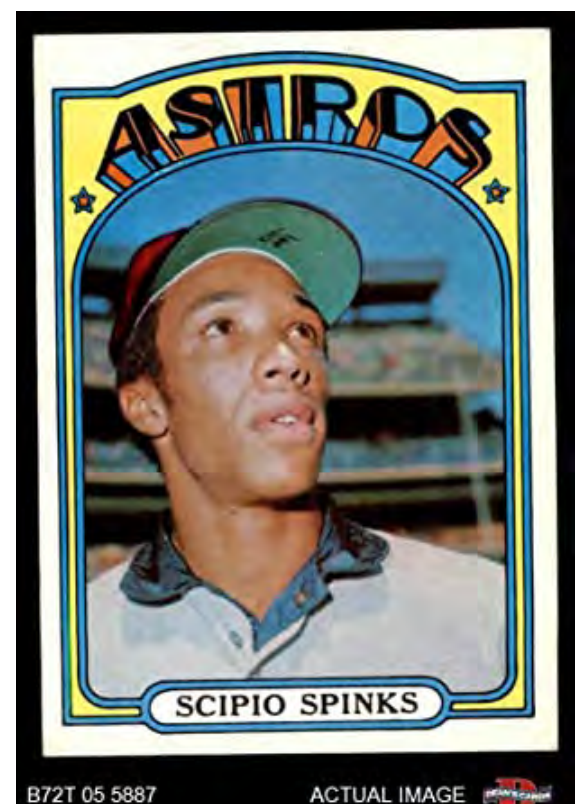
During a collision

with Cincinnati Reds catcher Johnny Bench, Spinks tore the ligaments in his right knee, severely injuring it. The injury benched him for the rest of the year, returning in 1973 for just 8 games before injuring his shoulder.

He retired his physical career in 1976. He continued his career by again working with the Astros, but as a scout and a pitching coach, rather than a player.

The question now remains: How will the acquisition of

Scipio Spinks affect the UHD baseball club? Having someone who was able to perform at the level of major leagues during the era of players like Mike Schmidt, Reggie Jackson, Pete Rose, Tom Seaver, and Jim Palmer allows the club team to hear the perspective of the game from a different generation.



A 1972 Topps trading card of Scipio Spinks as a member of the Astros. Photo courtesy of Amazon.com



# UHD's new Wellness and Success Center coming soon

By Anthony Raul Ramirez

From Dec. 2016 to Sept. 2018, surveys were sent to UHD students via GatorMail. During UHD Homecoming in 2018, students were asked to vote for or against the construction of a new wellness center. The vote asked if students were willing to pay an extra facility fee, not exceeding \$150 per student for regular semesters, \$75 per student for 8 week or longer terms, and \$50 per student for terms less than 8 weeks. Students scheduled to

graduate before the beginning of construction were encouraged to vote for the facility with the promise of a gym membership of one year for each semester that their tuition contributed to the facility.

The vote passed, allowing construction on the 75,000 square foot facility along with several acres of green for outdoor activities.

The description of the facility on UH's Facilities Planning and Construction webpage

states that "Due to campus growth, a larger recreation facility is required to accommodate the student body. In addition to the exercise component, the new building will also offer other amenities, such as healthy eating options, counseling space and classrooms for health and fitness learning."

Renderings of the new facility show areas for juices and smoothies, a swimming pool, an indoor track, and larger basketball court and more gym

equipment locations compared to the current facility.

On the FAQ section of the Sports & Fitness webpage, it is stated that "[the Wellness and Success Center] would be the catalyst in changing the face of the campus from a mostly concrete environment, to one of open green spaces and dramatic scenery. The current UHD Student Life Center is 20 years old and is inadequate for the growing population of UHD which

warrants the need to expand. UHD currently has no ball fields and open green space for its students to play and recreate. Students participating in outdoor club sports teams and intramural sports must travel to different parts of the city to practice and play at rented outdoor facilities."

With this relocation, the question still exists of what will happen to the current facility. Suggestions have been to redesign it into a building for

more student activities, student organizations, a student lounge, a game room, or even a bowling alley.

Regardless of what is chosen, the Wellness and Success Center will be able to provide physical activities to a much larger student population.

The new facility will be located further north of the current Student Life Center across the bayou and is expected to be completed within the next two years.



Renderings of possible concepts (a pool and a basketball court) for the new Wellness and Success Center. Photo courtesy of UHD Sports and Fitness

## UHD's new Wellness and Success Center prepares for LGBTQ+ wellness and success

By Jaida Doll

SmithGroup architects designing UHD's new Wellness and Success Center met with LGBTQ+ students on March 11 to discuss the main concerns in creating a safe, comfortable, and inclusive environment for UHD's upcoming building.

"This is the first time input has been sought from LGBTQ members of the university

community concerning the planning of a new building, so this is a wonderful opportunity," stated John Hudson, Ph.D., UHD's Director for the Center for Diversity and Inclusion.

Jared Smith of SmithGroup began the conversation by prompting students to explore which aspects of wellness are most important for them to see in the new build-

ing. Answers ranged from gender-neutral bathrooms and locker rooms, to mental health and counseling resources. Other students remarked on the need for comfortable, inclusive, and relaxing spaces for rejuvenating in between classes or decompress after exams.

This was one of many focus groups organized as a means of engaging with

students, hearing their voices, and implementing their ideas into the planning and construction of the new building. The designing of the building has been a mainly student-focused project, as architects are currently planning how to attain the best options for students, while balancing those desires with the available finances, as well as with the needs of

the administration.

In constructing this Wellness and Success Center, UHD extends this idea of wellness much further than the physical implications of the word. Although the building will include a fitness area, the new Wellness and Success Center will expand the idea of wellness to encompass mental, physical, and emotional wellbeing.

Hudson explains the goal of the new building by stating it will be, "More than recreational – transformational."

The designing phase of the new Wellness and Success Center will extend until Dec., and construction of the building will begin in Jan.



# Wellness and Success Center focuses on gathering student input... and nap pods

By Jaida Doll

SmithGroup architects of UHD's new Wellness and Success Center stood outside UHD's Health Fair on Feb. 26 to gather student input and ideas concerning the new project.

They handed students six stickers and asked them to place the stickers on the pictures of which designs they would like most to see implemented into the new building.

The options for voting and discussion included general fitness aspects like cardio rooms, an indoor track and weightlifting room. More unconventional fitness options were also offered including a parkour obstacle course, a rock-climbing wall, and yoga rooms.

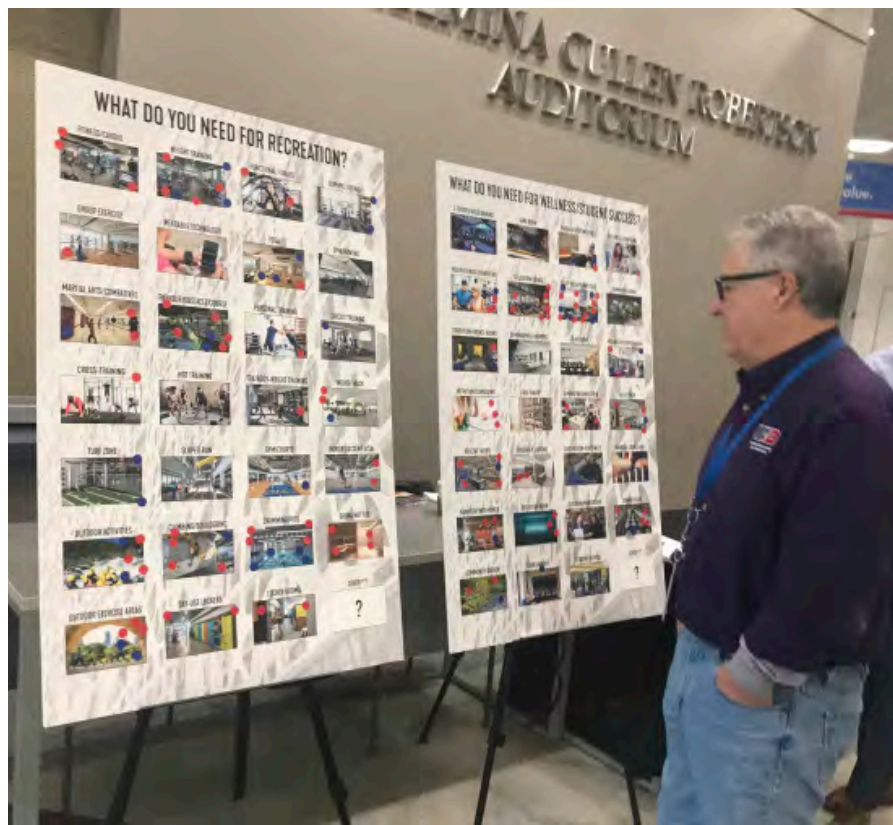
Though many of the options and activities offered were physical, UHD's new Wellness and Success Center will extend beyond the idea of simple physical health. Much of the building will be focused on fitness and athletics, but the building's mission is to increase students' mental, physical, and emotional well-being. Plans also include options for healthy eating, counseling services, recreational activities, as well as options for lounging, rejuvenating, and contemplation.

Students were also asked to vote for which of these non-athletic aspects of the building were most important to them. These options included

a community garden, a meditation room, laundry services, and a hot tub or sauna.

Of all the ingenious options the architects offered for student success, by far the most popular one was the possibility of sleep therapy rooms – or nap pods.

Though the sticker voting exercise conducted by SmithGroup does not actually have any final say in what goes into the construction of the building, it is a way to hear students' voices and find out what is important to them. As this is a student-focused project, what is important to students is likely to be important in the construction and design of the building.



Students and faculty gather outside UHD's Health Fair to vote on which aspects they would most like to see in UHD's new Wellness and Success Center. Photo Credit: Jaida Doll

Based on SmithGroup's chart, nap pods are clearly of ul-  
timate importance to UHD students, so it is not unlikely if they  
make their way to campus by 2021.



The possible options for UHD's new Wellness and Success Center. Photo credit: Jaida Doll



# UHD should host another candidate meet & greet (online)

By Sheila Ortega-Calvillo

On Feb. 26, the Center for Public Deliberation hosted the Candidate Meet and Greet event as part of the UHD Civic Engagement Tradition that occurs twice a year. Candidates running for local, state and national offices each made time in their schedule to discuss with students what issues they were most passionate about and responded to any questions from UHD gators. The event was open to any student that would like to participate, making it accessible for anyone on campus at 9 a.m..

Before the deliberations, Dr. Juan Sánchez Muñoz, UHD's President, made an announcement sharing his gratitude for such great turnout and participation from both candidates and students.

The event was mostly a success, however, some students walked out feeling like they learned nothing. Some even said, that was just time to socialize with candidates or watch them compete with one another.

Considering all that has happened in the lately – the conformation of a pandemic, the lockdown of our city, our students booted from campus, and faculty pushed to switch their entire curriculum to online delivery – it is safe to say that local candidates have a whole lot more to worry about when it comes to student concerns. Sure, paying for school and better access is still a main concern, but for entirely different reasons and in completely different

circumstances.

Some questions that would be great to ask candidates, now that our students have to learn from home and faculty has to re-invent their course, are listed as follows. Regardless of whether another meet and greet is hosted, such questions are valuable considerations when casting votes for local, state and national elections.

What can candidates offer to help with, now that student workers have lost their jobs because of the school closings?

How can these candidates make a positive impact on student success while taking classes online and being separate from the entire com-

munity?

How can candidates support students through such emotional, psychological and spiritual separation as well as limits because of social distancing?

What can students do to keep paying their bills and afford food and medication if needed?

What are we

supposed to do if we graduate, cannot walk because commencement is cancelled, have a balance to pay off with no job or limited hours and then cannot work with a degree because the world is on shutdown?

How can you help faculty not get overwhelmed with such drastic changes

is such little time, are teachers getting any help financially or other means of support?

What have you done to support Texans since the outbreak?

Whose statements should we believe, the CDC or the "leader" of our country, Donald Trump?



Students and faculty gathered to meet local, state and national candidates. Photo credit: Sheila Ortega-Calvillo

# Did you know...? Variety is on the menu as food trucks wheel into UHD

By Sheryl Sellers

A new dining option has hit the streets of UHD. Well, maybe not the streets, but definitely the north side of the new College of Sciences and Technology Building (CST). Houston food trucks now roll onto campus Mondays through Thursdays from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

An added benefit to this – personal funds can now be loaded onto the new, updated UHD I.D. cards, and used for payment.

The wide

range of lunch alternatives offered by the diverse and assorted food trucks include Japanese, Vietnamese, Korean, Chinese, Mexican, and American fare.

For instance, those who like it hot can steam over to the Burger Joint for their Fire Burger. For a little something different, Coreanos will treat tastebuds to Korean BBQ Tacos, and El Scorcho Tacos. Or, sidle up to Miss Patty's Wagon for a Zesty Shrimp Po-boy or a Famous Philly Cheesesteak.

The Waffle Bus will ramble over offering, you guessed it, waffles! These aren't your typical waffles, as the toppings seem endless. Among the choices are Chicken and Waffle Fryders and Chocolate Covered Strawberry Sweet Waffle Sandwiches, and of course, Waffle Fries.

What about those fries? Food trucks offer Kick-N Grilled Chicken Fries, Bacon Parm Fries, KimCheese Fries, Queso Kimchi Fries, and Hot Mess Fries. The variety in fries alone is astonishing.

Depending on the day, the choices can include Vietnamese Fajita Wraps, Krazy Korean Shrimp and Turf Bowls, Swaggy Dog or Krabby Patty Makirritos, General Tso's Chicken, Brisket Egg-rolls, Yo Yo's Hot Dogs, Bulgogi Rice Bowls, and Frozen Custard dessert.

Food truck

schedules and menus can be found on the UHD website by searching for "food trucks". Keep an eye out for the truck of the day, as they rotate

throughout the weeks.

Though COVID-19 has cancelled classes, food trucks will return once campus reopens.

Bon Appetite.



Students enjoying lunch at the Burger Joint food truck.

Photo credit Sheryl Sellers



# UHD's Art Club hosts women's fundraiser

By Yessenia Rincon

March is Women's History Month, honoring the achievements and celebrating women and the integral role they play in our country.

On that note, the UHD Art Club hosted their first ever women's fundraiser. From March 2 through March 6, the Art Club sold students' women-related artwork in front of the campus bookstore. All of the artwork was priced at \$15 and below,

and raffle tickets were priced at two dollars. The winner of the raffle will receive six pieces of art.

President of the club, Kelsi Rios, hopes this event will become an annual appearance, and possibly a tradition for the club. Not only will it help raise awareness toward women's causes, but it also supports our campus artists.

All tickets that were raffled off, as well as

a part of the proceedings was donated to the Free Spirit Wellness for Women Foundation.

This non-profit organization was founded in 1997, dedicated to assisting women who have been verbally, emotionally, physically or sexually abused. Their goal is to empower and educate women to create a positive self-image, a clear sense of one's identity and a strong self-esteem.

For more information on the Free Spirit Wellness for Women Foundation, visit their website. Or find out how you can contribute to the cause.

For more updates and information, on UHD's art club, you can follow them on Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook @ArtClubUHD.



Some of the students' women related artwork that was sold at the fundraiser. Photo credit: Yessenia Rincon



Kelsi Rios, President of UHD's Art Club, manning the fundraiser table. Photo credit: Yessenia Rincon



Photo credit: Yessenia Rincon

# HACE Leadership Night

By Sheryl Sellers

On March 5 the Hispanic Alliance for Career Enhancement (HACE) hosted HACE Leadership Night, where they offered the opportunity for college students to work on and provide resumes to the sponsors of the event. The event was held at the offices of Crestwood Midstream Partners at 811 Main Street from 5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Food and soft drinks were provided to all that attended.

There were

approximately 12-15 students in attendance from various universities, however no other students from UHD.

Anna Garcia and Eloy Gutierrez, CPA, co-chairs of Youth Programming for HACE made opening statements.

Hugo Guerra, Senior Vice President of Technical Services at Crestwood opened the forum. He discussed the importance of leadership and how it is under recognized

in the majority of corporate America. He also commented on the importance of adapting to the work environment when adjusting to a new career.

Mr. Rob Harkness, Vice President at Crestwood, spoke next and focused on learning from one's strengths, strengthening marketable skills, and the need to be flexible. He discussed the value and importance in networking, citing that all his

positions came from extensive networking over the years. Harkness commented that there is no replacement for experience, absolutely no shortcuts and to enjoy the journey.

Members of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) in Washington, D.C. delivered a presentation regarding the need to be prepared for questions when pitching an idea. An important feature of presentation is to

not tell everything upfront, but to leave room to answer questions.

Yasmin Gomez, a team member of Change Management at Enbridge discussed the importance of joining professional organizations, having a goal plan and belief in oneself.

Following the presentations, attendees circulated among the tables set up by the CIA, Phillips 66, Enbridge and Crestwood to ask ques-

tions, offer resumes and learn more about the companies.

The evening ended with a drawing for two tickets to the Alley Theatre.

The HACE members were welcoming, encouraging and the insights provided valuable for future career goals.



# Outer space and earth gems showcased at Clear Lake Gem and Mineral Show

By James Jurewicz

Vibrant colors and remnants from our planet's history were on full display at the Clear Lake Gem and Mineral Show on the weekend of Feb. 22. The show was held at the Pasadena Convention Center in Pasadena, Texas just off Fairmont Parkway.

It was not just precious trinkets from our terrestrial planet for sale. Meteorites were a prevalent and very popular item at the show. There were also samples from our own moon.

The show

abounded with quality booths available which provided handmade, custom wearable works with all the colors of customers' choosing.

One of the booths, The Lonestar Metrorite, offered different rocks and even fossils. Their best value however was the Mammoth tusk. It seems that Mammoth tusk is swiftly becoming a hot commodity in the fossil market. Global warming and glacial melting have contributed to this rare ivory becoming exposed on the northern tundra's of the planet. Mammoth ivory is

currently being actively sought out by fossil collectors. Mammoth ivory is actually one of the few legal types of ivory due to the animals current extinction status. Cloning and gene research however could possibly change that status.

The crowd varied from older people enjoying the geological beauties, to professional and aspiring geologist, to people who arrived fashionably by stroller.

One did not need to go far to find an expert on just about every facet of geology.

It seemed that almost all available floor space was occupied with professional or amateur geologist showcasing a wealth of knowledge on all things related to precious stones or fossils.

It seemed that there was something present at the show for just about any age and interest. The dinosaur talk followed by a fossil hunt for the kids offering an interactive experience for Houston's aspiring geologists. A booth at the show was even advertising and selling teething necklaces for toddlers.

A full snack bar fed any hungry show goers, and judging by the packed tables in the dining area, the food was very popular. Though the food was good, the most interesting and entertaining exhibit at the show was the rock food table, located near the back of the convention center. It included a table set with a veritable feast, all of the plates neatly decorated with what seemed to be delicious food. Hopefully nobody

attending the show attempted to take a taste from the display of inedible but visually appetizing rock.

Everyone who attended the show that weekend was also offered a chance to enter the raffle, filling out their personal information in hopes of winning the geological wonder of grand prize. The Bubble Cut Missouri Lace Agate seemed like it could belong in any living room. The grand prize precious gem was larger than an American football and is a veritable eye-catcher. The Bubble Cut Missouri Lace Agate had many guests to the

show eagerly awaiting the final drawing.

The parking lot was still full of cars on Sunday afternoon, just two hours to closing with plenty of purchases yet to be made. This event was similar to the show held in 2019, yet it had seemingly more exhibits and vendors. The rock food table was a very welcome and an unforgettable addition to the 2020 show. A very fun and relaxed experience that surely has left the attendees anticipating the winter of 2021.



The Rock Food Table at The Clear Lake Gem and Mineral Show In Pasadena, Texas.

Photo credit: James Jurewicz



The grand prize drawing, the Bubble Cut Missouri Lace Agate

Photo credit: James Jurewicz

## Tomball German Heritage Festival

By Laura Dunn

Tomball was originally German settled, and still has strong ties to its sister city in Germany, Telgte. Student exchange programs, business, and diplomatic relations are among the exchanges between the two cities.

The German Heritage Festival and German Christmas Market are two annual celebrations of the German people that established and continue to influence the town. These festivals last a full weekend each and draw a huge

crowd from people in surrounding suburbs.

These events have continued to grow more and more every year. Shuttles run people to and from parking lots to the festival the entire time the festival is open. People park up and down neighborhood streets, making it difficult for homeowners to access their own driveways. Prompting many locals to put up 'no parking signs' for the weekend.

The festival itself has hundreds of

vendors for shopping, eating, and networking. A traditional staple of the festival are the plastic beer glasses in the shape of a boot that many festival goers choose to fill and wear around their neck.

The event is also equipped with a carnival with games, rides, and a ferris wheel. Live musical acts of traditional polka bands, and a tent dedicated to dancing are also offered. The event lights up all of Main Street.

Whether

of German descent or not, this festival offers up something for everyone. It is an opportunity to learn about another culture, or simply an opportunity to walk around and drink a boot of beer.

The Heritage festival scheduled for March 27-29 for this year has unfortunately been cancelled due to COVID-19. However, the German Christmas Market is still scheduled to take place Dec. 11-13.

## The Invisible Man

By Laura Dunn

The Invisible Man premiered Feb. 28. Due to the frequent airings of the trailer and the A-list cast, this movie was highly anticipated by movie-goers.

It was your typical science fiction, mystery, thriller flick, but it was done well. Elizabeth Moss, who plays Cecilia, did a phenomenal job portraying fear so that the acting comes across as organic, not cheesy.

Throughout the film, Cecilia is tortured, faced with impossible situations, and pushed to the limit both physically and mentally.

There are a few exciting plot twists throughout, and although the ending was

largely predictable, it is not quite what you might expect.

The film was loosely based on The Invisible Man film series from the 1930s, but it takes on a refreshing 21st century feel. The technology, although advanced, is not too far-fetched, and creates a very believable world for this story to exist.

The Invisible Man is a smart film that will keep your attention and keep you guessing. It's worth your while to check it out. It is now available on streaming platforms, so check it out to be that COVID-19 lockdown boredom.



# Slab culture and its influence on Houston

By Anthony Raul Ramirez

One of the greatest things that separates Houston's culture from other cities is our love for loud, vibrant, and influential art. No other example of art embodies this than the Houston car customization of slab culture.

Slabs are described by Langston Collin Wilkins, who has been known for his research in slabs for several years, in the YouTube video "'Slabs' and 'Swangas' – The Cars Built on Houston Hip-Hop," "Technically an older modeled, large bodied, American Sedan; Cadillac, Lincoln, Oldsmobile, et cetera. And it's embellished or outfitted with various types of body additions. The first and most important one being the

rims, called swangas or elbows, those are those cone-like rims that poke out pretty far. On the trunk you have what's called a 'fifth wheel' which is a rim that's cut in half and enclosed in fiberglass casing. Also explosive stereo systems that rattle, shake the car, shake the surroundings. And within the trunk you also have what's called 'trunk displays' which are neon or sometimes glass signs that convey particular messages to the community."

The term "slab" has had disputes regarding its origin. Some believe the term is actually an acronym for "Slow, Loud, and Bangin," which is supported by Houstonian rappers Z-Ro and Cha-

millionaire with songs titled after the acronym.

However, others believe the term originates from the concept of the cars, as they are low to the ground near the cement slab.

"Elbows" were told by J.C. AKA "The Slab King" in an interview by Texas Wire Wheels to originated from a man "profiling" (when a driver places their right hand on the wheel and left elbow outside the window) and saying "Look at how my wheels [are] out as long as my arm. These [here are] elbows."

There are also color elements that relate to how slabs are identified. The paint jobs are called "candy paint" because of the

colors are typically something resembling the hue of a Skittle. They often have Vogue Tyres that use yellow and white lining, known as "the mustard and mayonnaise."

The history of slabs is an interesting story based on how Houstonians choose to present themselves. With its beginnings in the mid-1980s, young men involved with drug dealing adopted the slab style as a way to show off their wealth. The style was adopted from the "Pimp Ride" style seen in Blaxploitation films of the 1970s. Slabs were then seen in the 1990s Houston hip-hop culture, making the car variation more of a representation of Houston's culture.

As Wilkins puts it, "Slabs are the visual element of Houston hip-hop culture. Slabs are a form of material culture that illuminates the values, attitudes, and ideas of the local hip-hop community."

The car models being altered also play importance in slabs. According to YouTube video "Slab Culture – The Documentary," a 1971-1976 Eldorado altered into a slab is known as a "Boss Drop," a 1980-1985 Eldorado is an "Eldog," and a 1980-1985 Seville is a "Slantback." One of the most sought-after cars to customize is a 1976-1985 Opera Cadillac because its simulated spare tires near the front of the car, similar to a 1930s

Cadillac, allows extra customization opportunities.

This is the heart and soul of slabs: being able to customize the vehicle to your heart's content to express yourself, your beliefs, your enjoyment, and your love for Houston's slab culture. Slabs have been present in Houston hip-hop music videos, in movies, in rap lyrics, and even on Anthony Bourdain's Parts Unknown with Houstonian Slim Thug expressing his enjoyment for the style.

A city as diverse, as together, and as united as Houston can't have its history and culture discussed without mentioning the vibrance and individuality expressed in slabs.

# Don't judge a book by its cover... or a television show by its episode titles

By Anthony Raul Ramirez

The dark humor, animated, satirical television series South Park began airing on Aug. 13, 1997. Since then, it has become one of the longest running television shows in history, spanning 22 years with over 300 episodes.

Concept for the show began after creators Matt Stone and Trey Parker's short film The Spirit of Christmas in 1992 became a big hit amongst CD and VHS tape sharing. Fox executive, Brian Graden, loved the film so much that he paid the two \$1,000 to create another version of The Spirit of Christmas in hopes of creating a potential series.

Stone and Parker composed the entire five minutes and twelve seconds using stop-motion and construction

paper. Fox executives thought it was too vulgar and poorly-made to be made a series, but Comedy Central executives enjoyed bootleg tapes of the film so much that they hired Stone and Parker to produce a show.

Criticism for the show was similar to Fox's, as the episodes were as vulgar and cinge-worthy as their titles. Two of these episodes, "Mr. Hankey, the Christmas Poo" and "Cartman's Mom is a Dirty Slut" were two of the highest rated episodes of the first season.

However, South Park's episode plots began having more mature subtext with further seasons. One example is the 2002 episode "The Biggest Douche in the Universe" in which psychic medium, John Edwards, is found by

an alien competition to be, yes, the biggest douche in the universe.

The episode can be seen on the surface as Stone and Parker trashing John Edwards and his practice using vulgar language with children as main characters, but there's a deeper meaning. Stan, one of the main characters, calls John Edwards a "douche" because he feels the psychic profession gives people false hope regarding loved ones who died or went missing. Stan goes as far as providing to an audience how cold readings by psychics work, to which the audience simply believes then that Stan is also psychic.

The episode presents the idea that people in these audiences aren't unintelligent, just misinformed about the psychic field and being manipulated by

John Edwards to pay money for false hope. And this is what makes Edwards a "douche" from the viewpoint of Stan.

Another example is the 2008 episode "Britney's New Look" in which Stan, Kenny, Cartman, and Kyle attempt to hide Britney Spears from paparazzi. The episode begins with the boys taking an unwanted picture of Spears for money, which prompts Spears to shoot half of her head clean off with a shotgun. She surprisingly survives, and paparazzi attempt to cover up the attempted suicide as a "new look" for Spears. The boys sympathize with Spears when they realize the town is attempting to kidnap her to use as a human sacrifice

for their corn harvest (a reference to The Lottery by Shirley Jackson).

The episode ends with a news station covering Miley Cyrus as a new upcoming pop star. Cyrus performed her shocking 2013 VMA performance just five years later, furthering implying the episode's theme – that fame can drastically change a person's personality and mentality.

This use of satire to convey underlying themes of social issues is rare in television shows, yet the best

television shows are those that give viewers a reason to think about what they saw. And that's exactly what South Park has done for over 23 seasons.

The latest episode was pretty good – Santa Clause tried cocaine with Jesus. I highly recommend it (the episode, not the cocaine).

There's also a Wiki ("Subject matter in South Park") that discusses episodes tackling specific subject matter and social issues in South Park.



Photo courtesy of IMDB



# Dr. Stone - An entertaining and informative anime

By Anthony Raul Ramirez

It's very difficult to find an adult born around the year 2000 who doesn't have knowledge about what anime is. In 1997, one of the largest cartoon channels on television, Cartoon Network, launched an afternoon television block known as "Toonami." This original version of the block centered around original Hanna-Barbera creation Space Ghost acting as a host to present cartoons in their specific time slots.

However, the iteration of Toonami that is most commonly associated with the name began in 1999 as Toonami made a couple changes: there was a new host named T.O.M., the block only existed on Saturdays for 5 hours and the shows presented were anime (basically cartoons with a specific look associated with Japan). This run on Saturday nights from 1999 to 2008 allowed children growing up at the time to see television not commonly associated with anything else on at the time.

Some of the prominent shows broadcasted on Toonami over the years include Dragon Ball Z, Sailor Moon, Samurai Champloo, Mobile Suit Gundam Wing, One Piece, Naruto, as well as some non-anime shows like Justice League, Samurai Jack, and Megax LR. Toonami were cancelled in 2008, then revived in 2012, and currently air on Saturday nights.

What makes Toonami and its shows interesting is that if someone were born the same year as Toonami began, 1997, they would be a 22 year-old college student today. As people grow, so do their interests. Older shows from Toonami's past such as Dragon

Ball Z, Naruto, or One Piece focused more on action and adventure. While this is stimulating for a younger person to (and it absolutely still is for an older person, but bear with me), we develop more of a taste for shows that make us think as we get older.

For example, 2 of the most successful movies of 2019 were Avengers: Endgame and Joker. Endgame was filled to the brim with action, but the amount of theories people created off the entire series of movies was astounding. Furthermore, Joker made over a billion dollars at the box office, becoming the highest grossing R rated film of all time with a budget of roughly \$60 million. Instead of a typical evil villain tie-in movie for the DC franchise, the movie centers around Joker's descension into madness because of a mental illness and mistreatment by the city's civilians. These two movies have one common grip on fans — they both make people think.

This stimulating quality is exactly what makes shows on Toonami appealing to all ages. One particular anime on Toonami that raises many questions in the viewers' minds is Dr. Stone.

The plot of Dr. Stone begins by explaining that humans and certain birds of the world have turned to stone for thousands of years. It's unknown how this happens, but people eventually break free of the stone, though they do so decades apart from each other.

The main characters Senku who works with science, Taiju who works by physical labor, and Yuzuriha who works with fabric

and weaving materials. The three have been friends since childhood and free themselves from the stone that encased them, though 3,700 years later.

The characters discover other people, though they have no knowledge of the technology that existed 3,700 years prior and have created villages with things such as grass huts for shelter and rock spears for weapons. The story progresses as they attempt to create a kingdom of science by showing villagers how impressive and useful technology can be.

It's noted early that each of them are necessary in reproducing the science and technology that has disappeared over time. Senku knows how to create technology from scratch using all chemicals, minerals, and anything else the environment provides. However, he's not physically strong and needs

Taiju to gather hard to reach materials like seaweed from the ocean or breaking down rocks. He also needs Yuzuriha's ability to weave together fabrics to keep them warm or for medical care.

Dr. Stone is an enjoyable show for anyone to watch regardless of if they've watched anime or not. Since the manga it's based on came out in 2017, and the first anime season finished in December, now is a perfect time for audiences to start getting into the show.

While older animes like Dragon Ball Z or One Piece have stories spanning decades of writing and world building, all you need to know about Dr. Stone is how advanced in technol-

ogy we are now and how different the world would be if we had to start from square-one again.

It gives viewers an enjoyable way to understand how the things

we use every day were first invented, as well as how useful knowing the science behind tools to their very core can be.



Dr. Stone series poster. Photo courtesy of IMDB

## "Allie Cat" Comics

By Carlos Reyes



By Carlos Reyes

