



# Texan News Service

INDEPENDENT STUDENT JOURNALISM FOR TARLETON STATE UNIVERSITY



**TEXANS TAKE  
THE COURT  
WITH NEW  
COACH AT THE  
HELM**

PG. 10

# MEET THE TNS EXECUTIVE TEAM



**JOLEE SKINNER**  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Hi I'm Jolee Skinner and I am the Editor-in-Chief for the Texan News Service. I am a Broadcast Journalism major and I am super excited to be an Investigative Journalist once I graduate this year.



**MICHAELA DENNIS**  
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Hi I'm Michaela Dennis and I am the Executive Director for the Texan News Service. I am a Journalism major. Following graduating I will commission into the United States Army.



**COPELAND WELCH**  
MANAGING EDITOR

Hi I'm Copeland Welch and I am a senior communications major with a minor in history. Following graduation in May I will be pursuing a career in journalism.



**REESE KEELING**  
ART DIRECTOR

My name is Reese Keeling and I'm a junior sports communications major. I enjoy graphi design and sports writing. I'm so excited for this year and all it's going to bring.



**HAELEY CARPENTER**  
DIGITAL MEDIA DIRECTOR

My name is Haeley Carpenter and I'm a junior agricultural communications major double minoring in business and communication studies. I can't wait to take over the Digital Media Directing position!



**JAXON HANSARD**  
SPORTS EDITOR

Hi I'm Jaxon, Im the sports editor for the Texan News Service. I'm a sports communication major and an theltics

# ‘Mean Girls’ debuts in 2024

*New version of classic film does the original justice*

**BY ASHTYN HANSARD**

*Multimedia Journalist*

With the new year starting, new movies are beginning to make their appearance in theaters, including the “Mean Girls.”

The movie hit the screens on Jan. 12, bringing attention to this new adaptation of the 2004 classic, and who doesn’t enjoy a fun remake?

The movie opens with a musical number performed by Janis ‘Imi’ike (Auli’i Cravalho) and Damian Hubbard (Jaquel Spivey), immediately stealing the show with their chemistry plus charisma. Their energy easily flows with Cady Heron (Angourie Rice), displaying their instant bond and friendship, while not hesitating to show tension when needed.

The energy shifts when Reneé Rapp makes her entrance as Regina George, queen of the plastics. Rapp easily entertains the viewers, pulling them in like a siren in the ocean. Her energy as Regina immediately displays her power in the plastics squad, which also includes Karen Shetty (Avantika) and Gretchen Wieners (Bebe Wood). The three actresses work well playing with their characters’ dynamics throughout the movie, shifting in their hierarchy when needed.

While every actor and actress was able to fully grasp their character and bring them to life on screen in a

beautiful way, the music plays a great part to the success of the film. Although some of the songs are more impressive than others, every song has catchy moments that the audience is able to easily enjoy.

Auli’i Cravalho’s vocals never fail to disappoint as Janis. She sings with a carefree sense while still keeping her tone and words strong, much like her character. Janis’ main song, “I’d Rather Be Me,” truly exposes how her character is shaped and her beliefs.

Although Cravalho gives an amazing performance, Reneé Rapp gives show stopping deliveries in her songs, especially in “World Burn.” Her vocals are spectacular, hitting notes in both the low and high ranges. Her voice holds just as much power as her character, only improving her performance.

While the movie has many fun moments and catchy tunes, the critics are not as convinced. With the announcement of the “Mean Girls,” many fans of the original were left wondering how it would compare.

Would it be just as good, or would it be a disgrace to the 2004 version? While I can’t speak for every fan, I believe the movie in no way harms the legacy of the original version of “Mean Girls.”

The “Mean Girls” is not a direct copy of the original, with some jokes and scenes being replaced or deleted



entirely to make it more relatable to teens and young adults in today’s time, it still keeps true to the original storyline.

Many iconic lines and moments still remain in the new adaptation, some with their own unique twist on it to give the scene a new feel. Characters loved and missed in the 2004 version appear once again in the musical, including Tina Fey (Ms. Norbury) and Tim Meadows (Mr. Duvall).

Although the 2004 version of “Mean Girls” is a classic chick-flick, the musical adaptation does a fairly good job keeping up with the same level of entertainment.

It’s fun, catchy and just the type of movie to watch when you need a break. Catch the “Mean Girls” in theaters while you can.



WEATHER

# Stephenville campus gets first snowfall of the year

*8 simple tips to keep you ready for bad weather*

BY THOMAS ENGELBERT  
Multimedia Journalist

Tarleton State University experienced its first snowfall of the year Monday, Jan. 15, bringing less than an inch of snow.

Despite the modest snowfall, temperatures with frigid winds dropped to a chilly low of 27 degrees.

Administrators decided to shut down the university on Tuesday following the weather, but that didn't stop the students. They were seen walking around campus, taking photos and enjoying what little snow they had.

Winter can be challenging, especially for college students who may not be accustomed to cold weather or may be by themselves for the first time. To help you stay warm, safe, and stress-free during such winter freezes, here are eight essential tips to prepare for the unexpected cold.

## 1. BUNDLE UP IN LAYERS

Layering traps heat closest to your body providing better insulation against the cold. Investing in thermal clothing, whether that may be socks, gloves, a hat or a jacket, may be a pricey option but it could be the tipping point in being cold or warm.

## 2. SEAL DRAFTS AND INSULATE WINDOWS

Improper sealing of window and door frames can make your living space uncomfortable and lead to drafts and increased heating costs. Consider insulating your windows with blankets, cardboard or styrofoam to help insulate



PHOTO BY: THOMAS ENGELBERT

Dick Smith library after the snow in Stephenville on Monday, Jan. 15.

your home or apartment.

## 3. INSULATE INSIDE AND OUTSIDE FAUCETS

Frozen pipes can lead to costly damage, but proper preparation can save a lot of time and money. If you have outside faucets, covering them with styrofoam covers is essential. If need be a styrofoam fast food cup, a towel even and duct tape can work just the same. For inside faucets keep them at a steady drip to prevent them from freezing.

## 4. STOCKPILE EMERGENCY SUPPLIES

Create an emergency kit for your home or apartment. Include items like extra blankets, bottled water, non-perishable food, a flashlight, batteries

and a basic first aid kit. Having these supplies on hand ensures you're prepared for unexpected situations.

## 5. STAY INFORMED THROUGH WEATHER ALERTS

Sign up for local weather alerts to stay informed about severe weather conditions. Whether that be through a weather app, text alerts, or community notifications, being aware of upcoming storms or extreme temperatures allows you to take timely precautions.

## 6. CHARGE YOUR DEVICES

Power outages are common during winter storms. Make sure to charge your electronic devices, including your phone and laptop, to ensure you can stay connected and access important

information, even if the power goes out.

## 7. WINTERIZE YOUR CAR

If you have a car, make sure it's winter-ready. Check antifreeze levels, inspect tires, and keep an emergency kit in your vehicle. This kit can include items like a blanket, snacks, a flashlight and a first aid kit.

## 8. KNOW YOUR CAMPUS RESOURCES

Familiarize yourself with campus resources related to winter weather, such as emergency protocols, designated warming areas and available transportation services during extreme weather conditions.

**GROWTH**

# Tarleton breaks ground on new Health Professions Building

**BY HAELEY CARPENTER**

*Digital Media Director*

Tarleton State University broke ground on a new Health Professions Building on Jan. 17.

This building will be an \$80 million facility that will open the university to three new degree programs; physical therapy, occupational therapy and physician assistant studies.

Dr. Ramona Parker started the event by welcoming everyone. She introduced people who were there, including some state legislators and representatives, the Mayor of Stephenville and John Sharp, chancellor of the Texas A&M University System.

Those invited ate lunch before the speeches started.

University President Dr. James Hurley, President of the Texas Health Harris Methodist Hospital in Stephenville Claudia Eisenmann and Senior Kinesiology major Erin Ballard were among those who spoke.

Ballard gave the students perspective of how the new programs are going to benefit Tarleton. She gave her experience of being from a small town and wanting to go into holistic and comprehensive practices in physical therapy.

“These additions mean that students like me, who are from small communities, can get their education, and then go out and give back to communities, like Hico, and increase the health of rural America,” Ballard said.

These three new programs open up more opportunities for students. The current classes are built in a way that they are broad enough to cover everything for every discipline. That means that students can build their classes to cater what they need for their major.

The new building will house more classes that can be specified to the three new interdisciplinaries. Tarleton is a rapidly growing school and this development will allow the school and students to grow and learn by giving more opportunities clinically and in the classroom.

The group then moved outside to the work site where the building will be and actually broke ground.

Ballard was excited just to have been considered and invited to the event. She got to sit and talk with influential people who care about Tarleton’s growth and success.

A professor in the kinesiology program was asked to choose a handful of students. The students that were willing to speak proved that they could and Ballard was the chosen student.

“I was so completely honored,” Ballard said. “It was truly one of the best experiences of my life.”

Move-in is planned for summer of 2025 and the building is located behind the current Nursing Building on the Stephenville Campus.

PHOTO BY: RENEE GEBERT

**Erin Ballard at the ground breaking of the new health professions building.**







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*Opinions expressed in Texan News are not necessarily those of Tarleton State University or the student body.*

# OPINION

## ‘Ins and Outs’ list:

*New year’s resolutions are a thing of the past*



**COPELAND WELCH**

*Managing Editor*

At the dawn of a new year, the gyms are a bit more crowded, the produce section at the grocery store is more sparse and people tend to have a little more pep in their step. In the past, this has been a result of people feeling motivated and committed to achieving their new year’s resolutions, but 2024 has put an interesting twist on the timeless tradition: an “Ins and Outs” list.

The concept is simple: you draft a list of habits you want to implement into your life and ones that no longer serve you or you want to break. The lists often varies in length with some being as short as five and others having 20 “Ins and Outs”.

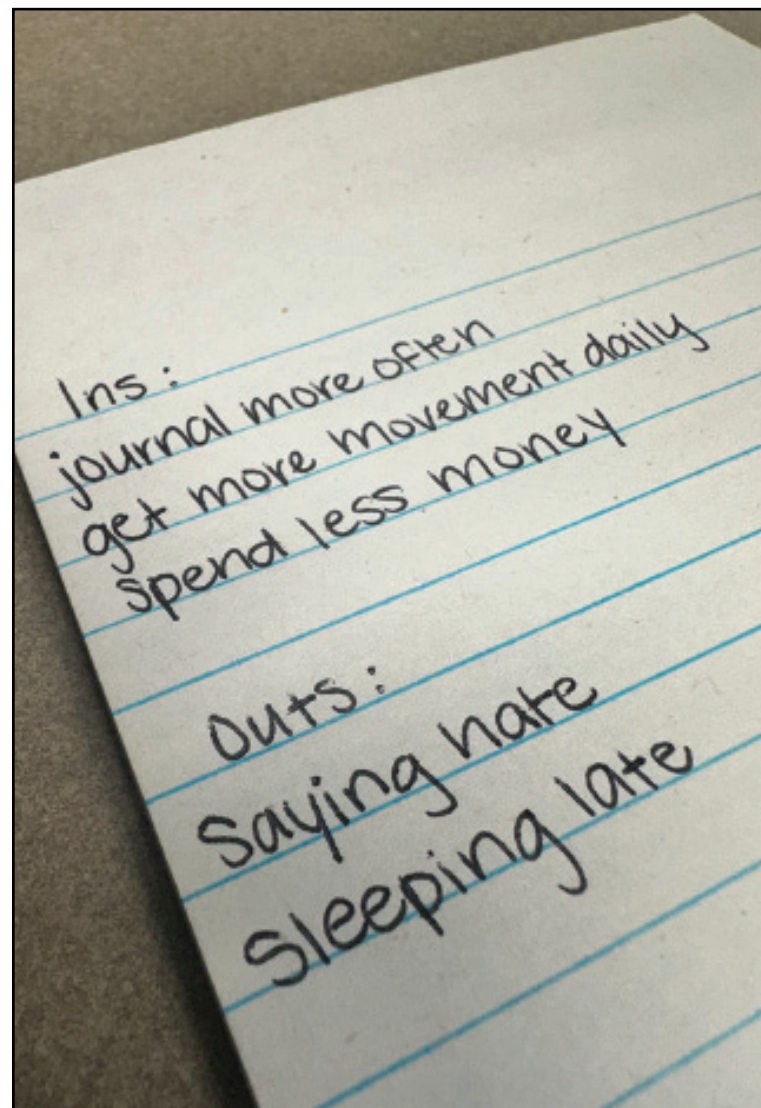
My 2024 “ins” encompass various aspects of my life. A few ins include journaling more often, getting more movement on a daily basis and spending less money on unnecessary items. On the flip side, my outs include saying “hate,” and sleeping late.

Implementing an “Ins and Outs” list is a fantastic way to become more self-aware of the habits that are no longer beneficial and brainstorm some ways to develop new behaviors and routines.

Karson Miller, a senior communications major at Tarleton State University, is one of the many individuals who made an “Ins and Outs” list. Her “ins” involved working out, reading and getting more involved on campus, while her “outs” included being on her phone too often, being unproductive with her free time and eating foods that are not nutritious.

“I think it’s good to develop new, better, healthier habits and also try to break some of your bad habits,” Miller said. “New year, new me, everyone wants to create a new self at the start of a new year.”

Miller has advice to offer anyone who created and “Ins and Outs” list,



“Remember how keeping with the ins and outs will make you feel, how you will grow and develop and how you will see improvements in yourself from breaking off those bad habits,” Miller said.

With the new year evoking change in the hearts of many around the globe, it comes as no surprise that an “Ins and Outs” list would become a trend in 2024.

## FOLLOW US!



## RODEO

# The Cowgirl who wears many hats

BY KILEY MORGAN  
Multimedia Journalist

Kinlie Brennise is what some would call an all-around cowgirl. She is a student rodeo athlete at Tarleton State University, breakaway roper in the PRCA (Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association) and small business owner.

Brennise is originally from Craig, Colorado, but found her love for Texas roughly four years ago.

She moved to Weatherford, Texas where she attended cosmetology school at Weatherford College for two years. After graduating cosmetology school, Brennise went on to Tarleton where she will graduate this spring with a bachelor's in business.

Since moving to Stephenville, Brennise has competed on the Tarleton Rodeo team for three years and opened her own business, Luxury Aesthetics.

"It's kind of a funny story. I never pictured myself owning my own business. I went to cosmetology school basically just to have a job while I went to college," Brennise said.

While in cosmetology school, Brennise met her best friend, Grace Seargeant. At the time, Seargeant was cutting hair at a local salon in Stephenville, where Brennise would soon open her own lash bed.

"I was interested in permanent makeup, so I got Grace to go with me to do a class on permanent makeup," Brennise said. "After we got certified, we learned that since permanent makeup was a tattooing service, we could not do it in the same room as any

other cosmetology service."

After hitting this bump in the road, Brennise went on a search for a small building to open her own salon with Seargeant. After searching, Brennise finally found a building where they could offer lash extensions, permanent makeup and spray tan services.

Brennise eventually moved the business to its current location at 2301 Northwest Loop, Unit 103 in Stephenville. A year ago, Brennise and Seargeant became co-owners of Luxury Aesthetics.

"We basically do everything but hair and nails here. We do permanent makeup, facials, lashes, face waxing, teeth whitening, an injector who does botox and lip injections, spray tans and makeup services for events and such," Brennise said.

Juggling school, rodeo and a business is challenging for Brennise.

"I don't always do the best job at juggling it all," she said. "I actually really like Tarleton's program because I have been able to be online my entire school career here, so then it's just my fault when I don't balance everything and get my work done."

Having school online and owning her own business makes it easier for Brennise to be able to rodeo at both the collegiate and professional level.

"I started my college career team roping, goat tying, breakaway roping and running barrels," she said. "This is the first year that I have only entered the breakaway."

Not only is Brennise about to start



PHOTO BY: TARLETON RODEO

**Kinlie Brennise is the girl everyone would call an all-around cowgirl.**

her spring semester of college rodeos, but she is also about to compete in one of the biggest professional rodeos, the Fort Worth Stock Show and Rodeo (FWSSR).

"I am really, really excited to compete at FWSSR," Brennise said. "Last year was the first year I stepped out of my comfort zone and went rodeoing... I went for a few solid months on the road. I actually qualified for Fort Worth

through the WPRA Finals (Women's Professional Rodeo Association). It is definitely cooler to make it to Fort Worth while you are in school because then they are like 'Oh Tarleton State'."

Brennise will compete at the FWSSR on Jan. 27 and 28 in the breakaway roping, so go show the Tarleton cowgirl some support.

# HOT BREAKFAST WORD SEARCH

B N E Y Q C I N I M T H A S H T R U V S  
M C A W P O T S I N C I E S M A P A C L Y W  
P M R K R F T F E S E I E D F A B H A U C I A E L A O Y M B  
H E F R T F U N C A M I C F W M H S I L G M E A Y O L P  
S M I F T B S B M I B A O T E B M H O F C G T U R A Y O L P  
S T B T B S B M I B A O T E B M H O F C G T U R A Y O L P  
S E E S B B I B A O T E B M H O F C G T U R A Y O L P  
F R I E B B I B A O T E B M H O F C G T U R A Y O L P  
T L N D P F A B H A U C I A E L A O Y M B  
M E M E A R A U C I A E L A O Y M B  
L S B A R A U C I A E L A O Y M B  
L M S R A B A U C I A E L A O Y M B  
L E Q A B A U C I A E L A O Y M B  
S T I U C I A E L A O Y M B  
Y C I I A E L A O Y M B  
Y E L A O Y M B  
P T S A O Y M B  
C U L Y M B  
G P Y M B

Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally, and backwards.

## WORDS

- BAGEL
- BISCUITS
- BREAKFAST
- BRUNCH
- BUTTER
- CEREAL
- CREPES
- CROISSANT
- EGGS
- ENGLISH MUFFIN
- FRENCH TOAST
- FRIED
- GROUT
- GRITS
- HASH
- MORNING
- MUFFINS
- OATMEAL
- PANCAKES
- POACHED
- POTATOES
- SCRAMBLED
- TOAST
- Waffles

B B S C L O T  
M O A T S A I V A  
B O L E D O L L A R  
A G A N A R E L E A R N  
R I M E D V A C A N C Y  
K E I T H R I G H A R D S  
E R R G I S  
C U E E R A  
M A N K R A  
M A R I L Y N M O N R O E  
P A R O T I D T E A L B  
P E R I L E D C U B I C  
R A I N E D B I V A  
A C N E D B E E P  
G E E S B B E

# Texan Fun Page

## Guess Who?

I am an actor born in California on February 9, 1987. I made my first TV appearance in an episode of "The Sopranos." I rose to prominence on "Friday Night Lights" and I was propelled to fame after a string of high-profile roles, including the antagonist in Marvel's "Black Panther."

Answer: Michael B. Jordan

## WORD SCRAMBLE

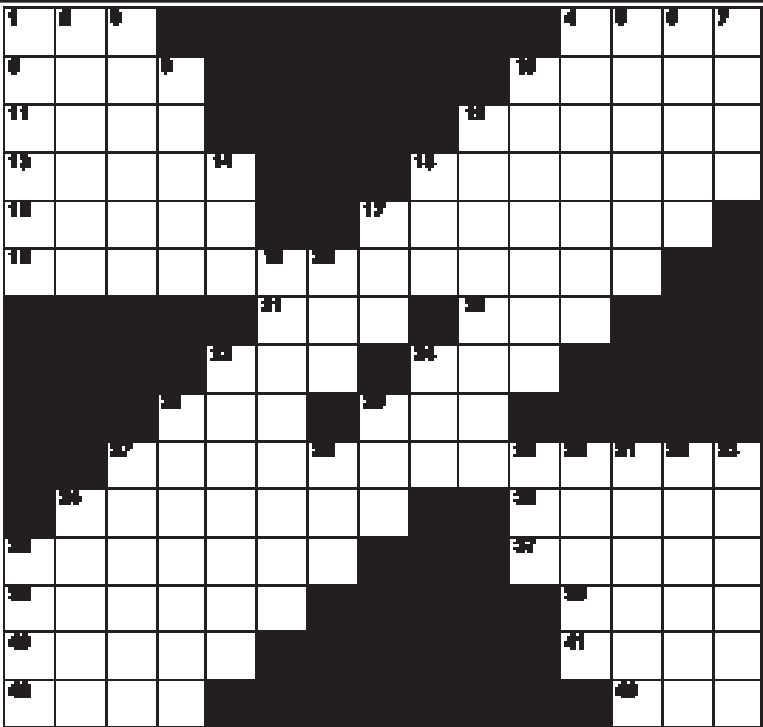
Rearrange the letters to spell something pertaining to breakfast.

## ATTODES

--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Answer: Toasted





CLUES ACROSS

1. One point south of due east

4. Coagulated blood

8. Fortifying drink

10. Devotee of Hinduism

11. Trunk of a tree

12. Bank note

13. Capital of Guam

15. Study again

16. Covered with hair/fur

17. Opening

18. Legendary Rolling Stone

21. Story

22. Computer storage system

23. Signal
24. Fictitious statistic

25. Human being

26. Malaysian language

27. The "Florida Roadblock"

34. A gland

35. Bluish green

36. Endangered

37. Three-dimensional

38. In a way, precipitated

39. God associated with dissolution

40. Blushed

41. Flow or leak slowly

42. Disco legends The Bee \_\_\_\_

43. Midway between north and southeast

CLUES DOWN

1. A way to board

2. Get down

3. Highly seasoned sausage

4. First day of month

5. European shrub

6. The organ that bears the scales of a flower

7. Small lake

9. Belief

10. Synonym

12. Metric weight unit

14. Vasopressin

15. Bravo! Bravo! Bravo!

17. One-time family cooer staple

19. Get back together
28. Anger

29. Sang merrily

30. Sea eagle

31. Military man

32. Kilo yard (abbr.)

33. Found in the sea

34. Protects from weather

35. Type of medicine

36. City along the Rhine

37. Animal disease

38. Martini ingredients

39. Get away

40. Lack of clarity

41. One-time European Commission officer

SUDOKU

	7	6	5	4				
		1				8		
				1		4		6
	6		9			1	2	
				6	4			
		4	2					
	9		6					
	2	3			7			
				5	3		7	

Level: Intermediate

Here's How It Works:

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

6	4	8	1	5	3	9	7	2
1	2	3	4	9	7	5	6	8
7	9	5	6	8	2	3	4	1
5	3	4	2	7	1	6	8	9
2	1	9	8	6	4	7	3	5
8	6	7	9	3	5	1	2	4
3	8	2	7	1	9	4	5	6
4	5	1	3	2	6	8	9	7
9	7	6	5	4	8	2	1	3

ANSWER:



## COVER STORY

# Coach Jones: Break the ceiling

BY JAXON HANSARD  
*Sports Editor*

Tarleton State University's men's basketball team started their season Oct. 30 like a normal year with a victory over Howard Payne University.

While the team was in California for the SoCal Challenge tournament on Nov. 19, it was announced that Head Coach, Billy Gillispie, would be away from the team with some medical circumstances.

Assistant Coach, Joseph Jones, would answer the call and lead the Texans to winning the SoCal Challenge tournament.

Since being the active head coach, the Texans have gone 10-4 and have a 12-6 record in total with close wins over Stephen F. Austin State University, University of Texas at Arlington, Abilene Christian University and a buzzer-beating swish by Jakorie Smith to beat University of Texas Rio Grande Valley University.

Jones joined the Texans coaching staff as an assistant coach in 2021 under Gillispie who was his coach during Jones' college playing time at Texas A&M.

The Texas A&M athletic hall of fame player did have a professional career overseas playing in a myriad of countries including Spain, Turkey, France, Israel, Dominican republic and lastly in Puerto Rico where he won the BSN Championship in 2019 with Santeros de Aguada.

"The hardest thing about coaching is



PHOTO BY: TARLETON ATHLETICS

**Coach Jones walking his team through their next play during a timeout at a recent home game.**

relaying the information to the players and get them to complete the task," Jones said.

When asked about his coaching style and comparing it to Gillispie, Jones said he's in it to win it.

"I really don't have one, my deal is to just coach to win. That's how we were going to do whatever we think is the best to do at that time, if it calls on me to get on to you and try to motivate you and just get all the way on you then I'm going to do that," Jones said.

The amount of turnover in this

year's roster compared to last season has allowed multiple players to step into bigger roles with the opportunity presented.

"The hardest thing for a coach to do is to trust someone new when you've trusted this guy for two to three years, with guys moving on and Jakorie, Lue, and (KiAndre) Gaddy being the main guys that played last year so it gives them the opportunity to play more," Jones said.

"I know KiAndre was a good offensive rebounder and now playing

more you see that he's a great offensive rebounder, he's top three in offensive rebounds in the nation."

The goal for this season is to win as many games as possible.

"I'm a basketball player that on the way out knowing how to get stuff done is by hard work and never giving up so if you keep showing up every day trying to bust through the ceiling, that ceiling is eventually going to fall and someone is going to try to build another ceiling and you got to keep trying to bust through that," Jones said.

# Dancing Through Life:

*Hrabal says dance is key to contentment*

BY JOLEE SKINNER

*Editor-in-chief*

Marlee Hrabal, raised in the bustling city of Fort Worth, had a wonderful, family-oriented childhood.

“My early childhood was filled with countless memories with friends and family,” Hrabal said. “A distinct memory I have from my childhood would be my best friend since the beginning of my life teaching me to ride my bike when I was four years old.”

She recalled back to when she first started dancing as well.

“If you ask anyone, I was always found dancing at a local dance studio where I spent 19 long years of my life participating in competitive dance,” Hrabal said.

As a younger sister to her older brother Conner Hrabal, Marlee and Connor are separated by an eight-year age gap. She talked about the age gap of her and her brother influencing their relationship.

“Yes, the eight-year age gap did effect our relationship for the better and sometimes for the worse,” Hrabal said. “With us being so far apart in age, it did create some struggles with trying to personally connect due to us being at different stages in our lives.”

She says it sometimes influenced their parents’ treatment towards them.

“I would say yes our parents did parent us differently for different reasons for example, since my brother was way older than me, he got to do different things than me since I was young,” Hrabal said.

But Marlee’s childhood was filled with special moments and challenges. Cheering for Conner at high school football games is one of her favorite memories, she values the bond between her and her family, however, it was dance that truly captured her heart.

“I fell in love with dance because it gave me an outlet to express my emotions whether that be happiness, sadness or excitement for new opportunities,” Hrabal said. “Dance has given me so many teaching lessons and I’m forever thankful.”

Through dancing, Marlee learned compassion, individual expression and teamwork. These skills have shaped her into the person she is today. She even continued dancing through high school. She says she loved high school and had a very fun experience.

“I was a part of the dance team at my high school, so I was always involved within the school so that really made it more enjoyable for me,” Hrabal said.

Her influential high school teachers fueled her passionate drive for education, inspiring her to pursue a college degree in education.

“Ever since high school I always wanted to go to college,” Hrabal said. “There was never a time in my life where I thought I wouldn’t go to college.”

Which led her to Tarleton State University. Choosing Tarleton was an easy decision, from its welcoming campus and historic traditions, Tarleton was singled out for Marlee.

“Tarleton stood out to me for the campus being so welcoming,” Hrabal said. “Every person that I saw on campus truly wanted the best for you and I saw so much hope in that.”

Upon arriving at Tarleton, Marlee wanted to pursue child and family development studies.

“Growing up both of my parents were teachers and I always saw how big of an impact they made, and I knew I wanted to do that one day,” Hrabal said. “I want to be able to help children in the hospital to help brighten their lives and help them to the best of my ability so that they can have the best

recovery possible.”

She relates to her major deeply. She recalls a family friend getting diagnosed with adrenoleukodystrophy (ALD) at Cook Children’s Hospital. This is a hereditary genetic condition that damages the membrane that insulates nerve cells in your brain. This genetic condition usually is found around four to ten years old. The white matter of the brain is damaged and symptoms worsen over time. If the condition is not diagnosed early on, ALD may lead to death within five to ten years.

This time in her life made her realize she wanted to be a child life specialist.

“A family friend got diagnosed with adrenoleukodystrophy last October,” Hrabal said. “He had a child life specialist at Cook Children’s Medical Center that helped the patient and the family not only cope with the new diagnosis but also helped them with all the transitions and emotions that come along with the hospital environment, the child life specialist made such an impact on the family and that’s exactly what I want to do.”

Marlee started to regularly volunteer at Cook’s in multiple units and then heard about a child life specialist internship there. She applied and got accepted.

“Getting accepted as a volunteer and intern was an extremely big thing for me, they only accept eight college students so I could not pass the opportunity up,” Hrabal said. “They saw something great in me and I was so thankful and excited to start this new journey in my life.”

The experience has been monumental for Marlee, she has witnessed the resilience and smiles of children facing different medical challenges.

“Being an intern at Cook Children’s Medical Center has been one of the biggest opportunities I have ever gotten,” Hrabal said. “Seeing the kids every day and knowing that you have made an impact in their hospital stay or

even their life is a blessing.”

She continues to talk about how much their patients need child life specialists. They need some light to have amidst going through a dark situation.

“The kids need you,” Hrabal said. “They need someone positive in their life, some children have no one with them at the hospital so they need someone to be there for them.”

Marlee reflected on how much volunteering at Cooks has meant to her. She talked about how grateful she is for this experience.

“Volunteering at Cook Children’s has been such a rewarding and fulfilling experience for me,” Hrabal said. “I have loved all the opportunities and connections I have made and received.”

Marlee talked about how she has yet to have any negative experiences, the environment at Cook Children’s has made every moment fulfilling.

Marlee continues to inspire those around her. McKenzie Shelton is a student at Tarleton and has worked with Marlee in dance related activities.

“Marlee is a great example of what a leader should be,” Shelton said. “She listens to the input of others, is hard working and is very resilient.”

Marlee’s leadership even caught the attention of the former Vice President of Cabinet Felisa Barron in the Phi Mu sorority at Tarleton, of which Marlee is a current member.

“Marlee is a passionate leader and holds herself to an extremely high standard,” Barron said. “Marlee continuously pushes herself to lead to the best of her ability by setting high standards and motivating others.”

As Marlee dances through the different stages of her life, her journey unfolds with gratefulness, compassion and a passionate commitment to making a difference in the lives of children every day.



## BOOK REVIEW

# Pre-movie adaptation book review:

*‘It Ends With Us’ promises to bring a compelling story to life*

**BY PAYTON MARKS**  
*Multimedia Journalist*

It should be noted that this is a book review of “It Ends With Us” by Colleen Hoover and will feature slight spoilers. The book itself, along with some of the spoilers, covers many heavy topics such as mention of suicide, sexual assault and domestic violence.

It is no secret that when a book blows up, sells enough or gains enough traction often it will result in a book-to-movie adaptation. It has happened with books such as “The Hunger Games”, “Divergent” and “The Fault in Our Stars”. (Currently in the works is an adaptation of “People We Meet on Vacation” by Emily Henry and later this year the world will get a movie release of “It Ends with Us”).

The film started production last year but was cut short for several months due to the SAG-AFTRA strike that took place this past year. The film is directed by Justin Baldoni and will star Blake Lively, Brandon Sklenar and Justin Baldoni as the three main characters.

“It Ends With Us” is based loosely on the story of Hoover’s parents. It is narrated in the first person and follows the story of the protagonist Lily Bloom who grew up in a household with her mother and her father, who domestically abused her mother.

The book showcases Lily’s life as it switches from her past to the present day through the use of her old diary entries touching base on her opinions of her mom’s experience with domestic violence and the story of her first love, Atlas.

A big plot point within the book is when her past and her present begin to intertwine in more ways than one.

The book starts off on a serious note from the very first page. We very

quickly see through Lily’s internal monologue that she is thinking about death.

While up on the roof, Lily meets one of the vital characters for the story, Ryle Kincaid.

The two quickly hit it off and share a very vulnerable side of themselves with each other. Lily even confides in Ryle about the passing of her father.

“My parents died this week,” Lily said after a remark Ryle made about parents.

Their interaction is cut short when Ryle, who is a neurosurgeon, is called into work.

However, two chapters later they meet again through Ryle’s sister, Allysa, who has just taken on a new job working for Lily, who recently sustained an injury. In my opinion, this is one of the funniest interactions they share in the whole book.

Good characters tend to have some form of character development and sometimes it’s fun to watch a character’s villain arc. In this case it’s not and Ryle is essentially the antagonist.

In the fourth chapter, we get another flashback to when Lily was younger and we get more of an insight into her, dare I say very wholesome, relationship with the ever-so-dreamy Atlas.

I’ll save you all of the details about Ryle and Lily and how they get together and their relationship because it’s not entirely crucial, however, spoiler alert, as if you didn’t see it coming, Ryle and Lily do eventually end up together.

The first bump in the road starts in chapter ten when Lily goes out to eat at a new restaurant with her mother and Ryle. And what could be wrong with that? Well, interestingly enough their waiter at the restaurant turns out to be Atlas, also known as Lily’s first love. Even more interesting in my opinion is the fact that Atlas wasn’t actually a

waiter, he’s the head chef.

Quickly upon realizing that this waiter is the man Lily has thought about for the past nine or so years, she excuses herself to the bathroom.

Lily takes a moment and stands in the hallway, and as fitting as it possibly can be Atlas comes over to the hallway and the two reunite. This interaction is the start of a very beautiful rekindling, well beautiful for these two, not so much for Ryle.

A storyline that Hoover briefly touches on happens two chapters later when Alyssa, Ryle’s sister, breaks the news to her brother and best friend, Lily, that she’s pregnant. Amidst her news she accidentally let it slip that Ryle and Alyssa both had another sibling who had passed. Hoover is vague with the details about their sibling at first but does reveal more later.

The chapter ends with more build-up of Ryle and Lily’s relationship. And throughout the next chapter and a half they are officially dating.

However, things quickly begin to go downhill. In chapter 14 Lily and Ryle are having a date night at Lily’s house where Lily is making Ryle dinner. While talking to Ryle and having a phone call with her mom Lily spaces out and forgets about the casserole that she has cooking in the oven and Ryle goes to pull out the dish, burning his hand in the process. In case you’ve forgotten, Ryle is a neurosurgeon so burning his hand is a very bad thing, however it doesn’t justify his actions that follow. As Lily leans down to check on Ryle’s hand things take a turn for the worse.

“Ryle’s arm came out of nowhere and slammed against me, knocking me backward,” Hoover wrote.

This is not the only example of domestic violence throughout Lily and Ryle’s relationship. In fact, the longer

their relationship goes on I’d say that their relationship becomes more toxic, and Ryle’s actions become much worse.

One night Lily calls Atlas for help and he takes her in, she eventually finds out she’s pregnant with Ryle’s baby, and even though Atlas tells her to leave him, at first, she refuses and makes similar excuses to that which her mom made for her dad, again mirroring her parents.

Eventually, Lily decides it is in her and their daughter’s best interest to leave Ryle.

Overall, the book was interesting but very serious and probably not something I’d read again. Some of the criticisms online also hold a lot of validity and weight, and these aren’t topics that society should be romanticizing. While I get why Hoover wrote the book, I do think it paved a path to give people the opportunity to romanticize being in a toxic relationship and almost excuse or romanticize domestic violence.

While I do think empathy and sympathy is important for the victims of domestic violence, as a society, we cannot justify and romanticize these kinds of situations or actions.

I also see a lack of focus on the trauma that these situations often create, and I feel like that could have been more important in the bigger picture as far as the book goes but I also know that Hoover has said that she wrote the book based on her parents. If you aren’t one for heavy reading, or discussing heavy topics this is not the book for you and I’m not entirely sure it is for me.

The movie adaptation was originally set to be released on Feb. 9, 2024, however, due to the SAG-AFTRA strike that date has now changed and the release date is currently unknown.

# Leadership award candidate reflects on her journey

BY MICHAELA DENNIS  
*Executive Producer*

Caliee Coulson is a junior at Tarleton State University who is taking the initiative to apply for the Leadership and Service Awards.

Coulson is academically classified as a junior at Tarleton despite officially beginning her college journey Fall 2023. As an incoming student, she longed for a new healthy distraction after breaking up with her long term boyfriend. Although hesitant, Coulson pursued Greek life and found her home within Phi Mu.

Her initial reason for joining the organization was for their philanthropy such as Cook's Children Hospital. Coulson found a personal connection with her sorority because she was a child who was treated by Cook's Children as a premature baby.

Coulson did not have huge expectations for her relationships with her sorority members. She planned on slowly involving herself in Phi Mu and seeing where things went until, the relationship she developed with her chapters members quickly turned into a sisterhood.

The relationship developed by them helped her heal after her breakup. A pivotal moment she had with one of her sisters was her first college roommate. Coping with the breakup, Coulson found herself emotionally distraught, her then roommate stayed up for two hours to talk through her emotions.



COURTESY PHOTO: CALIEE COULSON

**Caliee Coulson is a junior at Tarleton. She is expanding her horizons and applying for Leadership and Service Awards.**

"I found my saving grace in Phi Mu," Coulson said.

This moment opened Coulson up to the experiences she can develop within her new found sisterhood. She began to volunteer for a variety of committees, including the banner committee, staying behind to clean up after meetings, and volunteering during her sorority's recruitment process.

It can be rare for most college freshmen to be as involved with their university the first year enrolled. Coulson is elated by the work she has

done with her organization. She would not describe it as a job but another way to hang out with her friends.

"It feels like I am doing stuff for my family," Coulson said.

As she continued through her sorority journey she grew into a big sister by adopting two twin littles. In Panhellenic sororities, it is routine for their sisterhood to be developed through assigned sorority members being paired up as a big or little. Big being the senior member and the little being the newer member.

Although inspired by her sisterhood

journey within Phi Mu, she does not plan on trying to mimic the sisterhood experience she had.

"I try to make sure she has the experience with Phi Mu that she needs, not necessarily the same experience that I had," Coulson said.

Overall, Coulson's experience with her friends in Phi Mu has helped her to be an active participant for the chapter, this has motivated her to apply for the Leadership Awards.

To learn more about Phi Mu or the Leadership Awards, you can view both via [Texansync.tarleton.edu](https://Texansync.tarleton.edu).

## LIFESTYLES

# Creating balance in the kitchen

*The new year is a great time to focus on a balanced diet*

BY CHANCE ALLEN

Contributing Student Writer

In recent times, the American people have struggled to put their health as their first priority.

The reasons for unhealthiness include not exercising, over eating or simply not eating enough healthy foods.

According to the Better Health Channel, healthy foods aren't there to stop you from eating bad, they actually help your body prevent diseases and cancer.

Although there are a number of factors that contribute to why people buy the food they buy, educating yourself on how a balanced meal is made is the first step. Knowing what foods to incorporate into a meal is a place to start.

Incorporating carbohydrates, proteins, healthy fats, vitamins and minerals will provide you with the energy to thrive, according to Herbalife. Using the knowledge you gain from learning what foods carry which macronutrients, you can begin to see what meals you can make out of that.

A meal that I eat often to ensure my functionality and productivity throughout the day is a simple combination of nutrients.

The first step in making sure you have some protein in the meal. My two favorite proteins right now are chicken breast and salmon.

These are an amazing source of protein for an average of 426 calories and 52 grams of protein. The next step is finding a vegetable that you can eat consistently. I love to make a garlic chili sauce and sauté some cabbage, broccoli and asparagus in it.

Carbohydrates fuel your brain to do your everyday tasks. I love to incorporate either



PHOTO COURTESY OF PIXABAY.COM

**A balance of proteins and carbohydrates along with ample fruits and veggies are key of optimum energy and recovery.**

brown rice or russet potatoes on the side of my meals. With my carbs, I like to make a Greek yogurt sauce to go over just about everything. Eating fruits throughout the day will grant you amazing amounts of fiber.

There are many important steps to ensure that you get all of the nutrients you need. Portion control is one of the hardest. Being able to be satisfied with not being full, not eating huge meals and spacing out the eating throughout

the day to keep the metabolism running.

Educating yourself is the most powerful weapon when it comes to changing your lifestyle. You would be surprised how far it can take you.



## FEATURE

# The world needs more excellent teachers, Tarleton is producing them

BY HANNAH BELL

*Contributing Student Writer*

Tarleton State University's Teacher Education Program focuses on the success of the students of the past, present and future.

Tarleton is known for the teachers they produce through its Teacher Education Program.

Undergraduate students who are seeking initial Texas teacher certification through the Tarleton Teacher Education Program are guided through the program from the time they start their application until they complete all field experiences, testing and are recommended for certification.

Prospective students can receive a Bachelor of Science in Elementary Teacher Education at Tarleton. This degree will help master teaching skills and specialized knowledge in an academic discipline.

The goals of this program have led to the success of many student educators.

Courtney White graduated from the program in 2018 then she started her educational career working as a fourth grade teacher at the Academy of the Arts at Bransom Elementary in Burleson Independent School District.

"Tarleton prepared me in many different ways to be a great educator but most importantly to value each student as one, rather than a number," White said.

One of the main goals of Tarleton's Teacher Education Program is to continuously be committed to professional growth and development.

"Many of my professors still check in every few months just to see how I am doing, and if there is anything that they can do for me. I really appreciate that because it just shows how invested these professors are in their students, even after their commencement," White said.

In 2020, White won Teacher of the Year at her school.

"I was completely shocked. Winning that award made me realize that everything I had



PHOTO COURTESY OF TARLETON STATE UNIVERSITY

**The 11 universities of the A&M System produce more fully certified teachers than any other university system in Texas, and have the highest number of teachers remaining in the profession for the first five years of their career.**

done to get here had been worth it," she said.

After teaching fourth grade for four years, White is a Tarleton student yet again, pursuing Master's in English.

The excellence of Tarleton's T.E.P. has not led just White to success, but thousands of other educators that have pursued an education degree from Tarleton State.

"From the moment I stepped foot into my first class as a student teacher, I knew that this

was where I was meant to be. It is all because of the constant support from the program above me," said current Tarleton student Makenna Frisch.

Frisch plans on returning to her hometown, Temple, Texas, to teach her own classroom after her commencement in 2024.

Currently, Texas is experiencing a shortage of teachers across the state. While being part of the Texas A&M system of schools

that combined produce the greatest number of teachers in Texas. Tarleton has a stellar reputation for the quality of teachers.

Tarleton teachers are highly qualified and sought after across the state. Prospective students can find this program at the Fort Worth, Stephenville and Waco campuses.

They can also contact 254-968-9000 to access the College of Education and Human Development.

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