



HISTORIC DONATION

ALUMNUS HONORED FOR
\$12.5 MILLION GIFT

pg. 3



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There are great benefits of working on campus

BY ANNABETH JOHNSON
Multimedia Journalist

From paying tuition, buying books and getting groceries, it doesn't take long for college students to begin looking for employment opportunities in order to cover their evergrowing expenses.

During college, students often have two different housing options: they live on campus or reside somewhere off campus.

When searching for a place of employment, one should take into consideration the benefits of working on campus.

There are numerous advantages to working on campus as a student who lives on the campus grounds.

Bethany Kilpatrick is a freshman at Tarleton who works at the Tarleton Campus Recreation Center and describes the advantages of her job that is on campus.

"It's a super social job where I meet tons of people on campus," Kilpatrick said. "Getting your schedule moved around or being flexible they [Tarleton] is really good at helping you work around that."

By working on campus, students save gas money, can potentially work more hours and make connections with other students.

As residents on campus, students can save money by walking to their jobs. Students also would not have to worry about parking, as they could leave their car where it is.

Tarleton State University offers many jobs on the campus in Stephenville, Texas, for students who are willing to take initiative and put themselves out there.

Some of these job opportunities could include a server at the dining hall or team member at any of the other food services across campus; a front desk worker at the Tarleton Student Center; a front desk worker at the library; a front desk worker at the Tarleton Sports and Recreation Center; Residential Leader at the apartments or dorms; a journalist for the Texan News Service or a tutor for a course offered at Tarleton.

Tarleton is also flexible with work and



PHOTO BY ANNABETH JOHNSON

Tarleton students Jazarah Yelloweagle and Isaac Maldonado work at Oscar-P's Stoure on campus.

school schedules as employers understand they are students first. With that in mind, a job on campus may give a student more hours than an off-campus job due to the flexibility the university provides.

Furthermore, students who work on campus are provided with the ample opportunity to build connections with other students that also reside at Tarleton.

Mackenzie Johnson is a student journalist for the JTAC newspaper at Tarleton. She encourages her fellow students to look into applying for jobs on campus.

"Pretty much every job on campus offers that authentic, hands-on opportunity because Tarleton is rooted in student success," Johnson said. "Therefore the jobs on campus are going to be geared towards helping students succeed after college."

For more information about on-campus job opportunities, visit the Student Employment page at <https://www.tarleton.edu/hr/info-for/student/> or call 254-968-9128.

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GENEROUS DONATION

Tarleton alumnus Joe Long celebrated for another multi-million dollar gift

BY HAELEY CARPENTER

Editor-in-Chief

Tarleton State University held a celebration reception for Joe Long, an alumnus and long time supporter, on Dec. 18 for his recent contribution of \$12.5 million to kickstart the College of Osteopathic Medicine.

The reception was held at the Joe R. and Teresa Lozano Long Center in Austin, Texas, a place named after the couple known for their generous donations. Attendees included board members of the Long Center, the Long Foundation members and faculty and alumni of Tarleton.

“[Joe] made the first million dollar donation and helped create the very first comprehensive campaign for the institution,” Tarleton President Dr. James Hurley said. “Joe’s path that he’s paved for all of us to follow has definitely been smooth because Joe puts his money where his mouth is. He asked others to give, but he gives first, and he does so through both stewardship and also soul leadership.”

The Long Center is named after the couple, as is the Lozano Long Division of Global, Community and First-Gen Initiatives at Tarleton.

Dr. Teresa Lozano Long passed away on March 21, 2021 at the age of 92.

They understand that others need an education; Joe said he is more than happy to help with that.

“It’s pretty incredible,” Hurley said. “It’s incredible to see a spirit of he doesn’t want any recognition with this last 12 and a half million dollar gift. He didn’t ask for any naming rights. He didn’t want the college named after him. He just said, ‘I want to leave a legacy of scholarships so those future doctors can better afford an osteopathic medical education.’”

This gift is part of the Texan Excellence Fund which is an opportunity for donations to be recognized and designated for specific use for the university and for the donors to encourage others to give as well.

Past donors like Dwayne Mayfield and Dr. Sam Pack have also made significant donations.

Joe Long is a graduate of the Tarleton Agricultural College then moved to University of Texas at Austin for his bachelor’s degree. When he graduated, he served overseas in the Korean War before coming back to Texas to teach high school.

Joe had a knack for banking, saving and investing.

“He was part of a group that organized two banks in Austin –First State and Community National. He later chaired and bought control of both. Those banks acquired seven more financial institutions and were combined in 1989 at First State Bank, with Joe as Chairman and CEO for the next nine years,” according to an article in Tarleton State University Magazine Spring/Summer 2022.

These ventures led him to accumulate the money he donates.

The Longs have donated more than \$200 million to Texas nonprofits and organizations.



COURTESY PHOTO

Among those on hand to honor Joe Long (seated) on Dec. 18 in Austin were, from left, Michael Hodges, executive director of the Texas Texas Association; Haeley Carpenter, J-TAC Editor-in-Chief and Austin Lewter, director of the Texas Center for Community Journalism.

SCHOOL SPIRIT

A day in the life of a Tarleton Texan Star

BY ANNABETH JOHNSON

Multimedia Journalist

Tarleton State University is a place with many opportunities and organizations that fit any passion or interest. The passion for dancing is one shared between Texan Stars Emma Siar and Anni Rowberry.

Siar is a freshman who can be spotted on the stadium turf supporting the Texans dancing as a Texan Star. She has been supporting the purple and the white as a Texan Star since July 2023, her favorite part of it being her very own teammates.

“My favorite part is definitely the girls,” Siar said. “We are a super close team, and they really just make it all worth it.”

With her academic and extracurricular activities, Siar has a full daily schedule.

Her day starts out with team weightlifting in the Wisdom Gym training room from 7 a.m. to 8 a.m. The team’s weightlifting coach has their workout schedule set up before they arrive so that they are able to jump right into their workout sets.

After workouts, Siar heads straight to her first class of the day. This class lasts about an hour then she is onto the next item on her schedule.

She makes her way to the field to warm up and begin practice. Practice for the Texan Stars is from 9 a.m. to noon.

Siar’s practice starts with normal stretching and warmups that the team does together as a group. In order to keep their cardio up, the team makes sure to run a mile every day.

Once everyone is warmed up, they will go over the game day performances for the next football game. The Texan Stars run through their regular thunderstruck routine that is the same for every first quarter break at every football game.

Siar and the rest of the team then polish a new performance that they will show for the third quarter break. The final events of practice include learning new tricks, jumps or halftime performances for other Tarleton sports.

After practice, Siar will spend six hours completing assignments in study hall. As required, she will then submit those hours to the Athletic Administration Office.

On Tuesday nights, one of the Texan Star team members hosts a “Stars Bible Study” that Siar makes a point to attend weekly.

The end of bible study on Tuesdays marks the end of Siar’s day, and she goes home to rest before another packed full day as a Texan Star.

For freshman Anni Rowberry, her journey of being a Texan Star began just this school year.

Being on the same team, Rowberry and Siar share the same daily schedules.

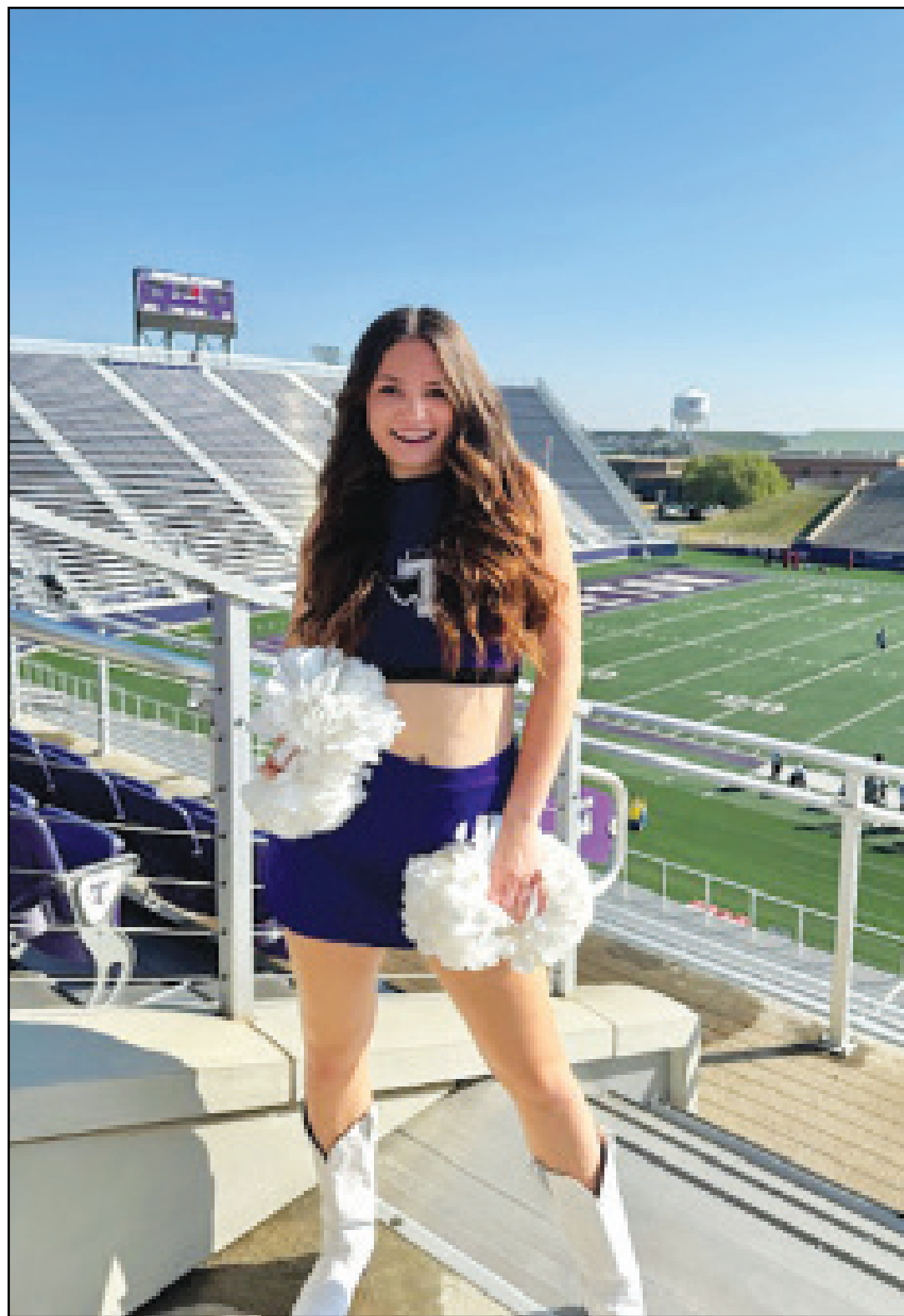
With a background in dancing starting at eight years old, Rowberry realized how much she loved it and wanted to pursue dancing when at college.

Rowberry chose to pursue that dream at Tarleton upon hearing how much her close friend who graduated from Tarleton enjoyed the university and all it had to offer.

After looking at the dance program here at Tarleton and receiving a great first impression of the dance coach, Rowberry was instantly hooked.

Rowberry realized Tarleton was the place where she would fulfill that dream and build strong team bonds. Since all of the girls shared a common interest in dancing, they were able to grow in their friendships quickly.

“My favorite part [of being a Texan Star] is the friendships,” Rowberry said. “This [team] is where I found all my best friends.”



COURTESY PHOTO

Anni Rowberry is ready to support her fellow Tarleton Texans at their home football game.

STUDENT SERVICES

Job fairs share opportunities for Tarleton students

BY BRENNA DEMPSEY

Executive Producer

Job fairs and career readiness go hand in hand.

There is a lot to learn from attending job fairs because it will help students identify fields that might spark interest for them and provide a way for students to interact with the companies associated with them.

Lindsey Marek is the director of Tarleton State University's Career Services, and her department hosts all of the job fairs on campus.

This helps to reduce the uncertainty that some students feel when they think about what they want to do once they graduate.

"This is just an opportunity for students to kind of get a feel for what careers they may want to pursue after college as well as just trying to figure out companies they would like to work for," Marek said.

The confidence that students gain from getting to talk to different employers is also a benefit of going to the job fair. It can teach them how to navigate professional environments in a way that makes them stand out to employers.

There students can get hands-on experience on what to do and what not to do.

It is not exclusively for seniors; it helps people of all academic years.

"We encourage even freshmen and sophomores to attend these so that by the time they're juniors and seniors and looking for internships or full-time positions, they are ready to do so," Marek said.

Attending these events also opens doors for future jobs. The employers at the job fair work with Tarleton and look out for the students.

"We actually have a lot of partners that are alumni and are looking to hire alumni, and so that is a big connection here for a lot of these employers specifically," Marek said.

Melinda Whitlock is a Tarleton alumna who is now in the education department and focuses on training new hires at Plywood Company of Fort Worth.

"We've had a lot of freshmen come by, and I think they seemed a little nervous, but I think that helped them just kind of get out there and talk to employers so that they will be more for next time," Whitlock said.



PHOTO BY BRENNA DEMPSEY

The admin annex building where the career services are located at the Tarleton State University Stephenville campus.

Students should keep an eye out for these events by staying up to date on the careers services' social media accounts.

It will help strengthen résumés by bringing to students' attention what employers are specifically looking for. There are resources available with Career Services for that as well.

Career Services offers workshops for resume help and practice interviews so that students can feel more prepared for the future. They are available every month online or in person to students.

Listed below are some tips for attending job fairs provided by the career service on their website.

-Dress appropriately and remember to bring copies of your resume.

-Know your résumé and your background

so you are able to tell an employer what you have to offer.

-Introduce yourself to employer representatives in a positive and confident manner. Smile, project enthusiasm and offer a firm handshake.

-Ask questions about career opportunities, specific job openings and the organization.

-Listen effectively. An employer representative may be able to refer you to another person who is better able to assist you.

-Collect company literature and business cards so you may follow up later.

-In addition to providing interviewing opportunities, job fairs will offer you the chance to network and build contacts. Keep track of the people you speak to and follow up with a thank you note.

-Ask about internship opportunities.

-Ask informational interviewing questions.

-Add employers and individuals on LinkedIn to maintain a professional relationship.

This is a program to help students take the next step in planning their careers.

Taking the initiative to go to a job fair can build relationships and skills that can be carried on throughout someone's profession to better opportunities.

The experience of getting to talk with employers and ask questions translates over to future interviews. This may seem like a small step, but it could lead to bigger things.

So get that résumé ready and hit up the next job fair available because that might be the choice that leads to a dream job.

WINTER BREAK



“WICKED” MOVIE POSTER.
PHOTO SOURCE: FILM AUTHORITY

After their movie “It Ends With Us” came out in the fall of last year, Lively and Baldoni have been all over the media, whether it was advocating for domestic abuse survivors, promoting hair care and now, a sexual harassment lawsuit. Lively filed the suit against Baldoni and his publicist for sexual harassment and an online smear campaign. There is also a \$250 million libel lawsuit against The New York Times. The original lawsuit was filed on Dec. 31 so the case is still early. Most recent developments involve pulling records to clear up the he said she said of it all.



BLAKE LIVELY AND JUSTIN BALDONI.
COLAGE BY MACKENZIE JOHNSON



NIKKI GLASER PRESENTING AT THE GOLDEN GLOBES.
PHOTO SOURCE: GOLDEN GLOBES

Nikki Glaser made history being the first woman to host the Golden Globe Awards solo. Tasteful jokes carried the night full of victories and losses. While most nominations and wins did not cause a stir, Wicked was beat out by Best Motion Picture in a Musical or Comedy, Best Performance by a Female Actor in a Motion Picture in a Musical or Comedy and Best Performance by a Female Actor in a Supporting Role in any Motion Picture. These losses caused quite an uproar. At the red carpet, Zendaya sported a rock of a diamond announcing her engagement with Tom Holland and Selena Gomez arrived with new Fiance Benny Blanco.

WRAP-UP

Former President Jimmy Carter passed away on Dec. 29, 2025. The 39th President celebrated his 100th birthday in October and his funeral was held on Jan. 9, 2025. At his funeral past and current presidents, vice presidents and their significant others were seen sitting together. Speculations went around social media surrounding a clip of Donald Trump and Barack Obama chatting at the funeral. Politics and beliefs were set aside to mourn Carter for the day.



39TH PRESIDENT JIMMY CARTER.

PHOTO SOURCE: LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

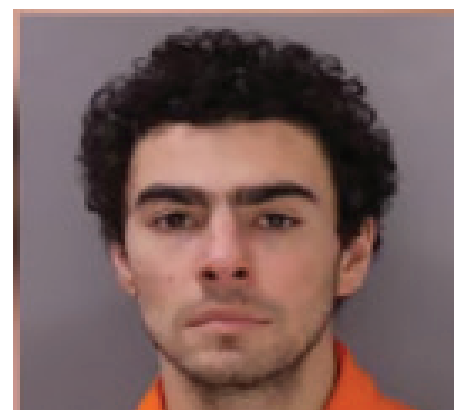


THE TIKTOK LOGO.

PHOTO SOURCE: TIKTOK

United Healthcare CEO Brian Thompson was shot and killed in New York City on Dec. 4, 2024. Luigi Mangione was caught at a McDonalds shortly after the murder with a gun and a manifesto explaining why he did what he did. There was a post on YouTube as well from Mangione where he tells what will come next. Nothing has come of the post yet but Mangione is still in custody. He was charged with murder as an act of terrorism and is being held without bail until further notice. Between the stir Mangione caused with the manifesto and videos and his striking looks, he stayed in the news.

TikTok has been arguably the most used social media platform in recent years. The United States government, however, had plans to take it away. After months of hearing with TikTok's CEO Shou Chew, it is official that the Supreme Court is banning the app. Senator Edward Markey introduced the Extend the TikTok Deadline Act which would push off the ban for 270 days but this was shot down. In a statement from the Biden Administration, they are saying that they believe TikTok should stay available to citizens but that it should be owned by Americans, and now the situation is in the hands of the Trump Administration. Donald Trump says that he will give a 90-day extension once he is back in office.



LUIGI MANGIONE'S HOLDING PICTURE.

PHOTO SOURCE: NEW YORK DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

ON CAMPUS

Community comes together at Fall Carnival

BY CAROLINE CRAIN

News editor

The Office of Campus Life and Family Engagement hosted their annual Fall Carnival Oct. 22 at the O.A. Grant amphitheater.

The event featured student-run booths and welcomed members of both the campus and the broader Stephenville community.

Alecia Echols is a Stephenville local who attended the event with her family, including her two children.

"I loved letting our kids see that college kids can come together, make a holiday like this fun and exciting and get them excited about the campus and the students," Echols said.

The event benefited not only visitors, but campus organizations.

Attendees purchased 25 cent tickets to use at various student-run activity booths. At the end of the night, students redeemed these tickets for funds to go toward their organizations.

Junior Mia Lombardo is the secretary of the American Sign Language club at Tarleton State University. Her organization ran the Jungle Train inflatable at the carnival.

"The money raised here helps a lot because it helps us put

on more events for our members and different ways that we can support our philanthropy," Lombardo said.

Around 30 student organizations were present at the carnival. Activities included inflatables, organization booths, food for purchase, face painting and more.

London Fair is the assistant director of Campus Life and Family Engagement. She shared her enthusiasm about the event to the Stephenville Chamber of Commerce.

"We are so excited to offer the Fall Carnival once again," Fair said. "Our students love interacting with the youth of our community. This is a win-win for both our community and students. The youth get to have a fun night, and the student organizations receive the funds their booths make for club meetings and conferences."

Many guests dressed in festive costumes, contributing to the lively atmosphere of the event.

Tarleton President James Hurley attended with his two daughters. His thoughts reflected the carnival's energy.

"I think it's incredible that we're able to open up the campus to the community and allow all the little future Texans to come out," Hurley said. "It's so much fun and we love seeing the little ones and just the community coming together. I'm really proud



PHOTO BY: CAROLINE CRANE

Tarleton State University Fall Carnival attendees play Axe Throw and Hoop Zone inflatables, Oct. 22, 2024.

of our students and the faculty and staff that are out here putting this on for everyone."

Duck Class of '28 received their Corps brass

BY BETHANY KILPATRICK

Multimedia Journalist

The Tarleton State University Texan Corps of Cadets Duck Class of 2028 received their brass at the Brass Ceremony on Saturday, Sept. 28, 2024, at the Earl Rudder Statue.

Freshmen cadets are called ducks and begin their training at the beginning of the year. Once they receive their brass, they are officially considered part of the Corps of Cadets.

Amber Trammell-Cobourn is a Colonel in the Corps of Cadets.

"The Brass Ceremony occurs during the first semester of freshman year for cadets. They are given their cross rifles, which is the official insignia for the Corps of Cadets," Cadet Trammell-Cobourn said.

The brass cross rifles carry significant meaning.

"The brass includes three components," Cadet Trammell-Cobourn said. "The rifles symbolize the military history of Tarleton. The banner reads the purpose of the Corps, principles unic, or to produce unparallel leaders and the single star symbolizes the Corps as Texans."

Olivia Ray is the Alpha Company's First Sargent and the Web and Communications Student Technician within the Corps

of Cadets.

"The cadets march up from the Trogon House to the Rudder Statue," Cadet Ray said. "Everyone stays in their companies. There is the Alpha Company and the Bravo Company. Then there are two platoons in each company. They are handed their brass by their company commanders."

The Brass Ceremony is a significant milestone in a cadet's journey at Tarleton.

"I remember my Brass Ceremony as a huge accomplishment and celebration," Cadet Trammell-Cobourn said. "I felt like part of the Texan family. My entire family came down to celebrate, and we all took pictures with our platoons and our companies. I had a lot of pride for the organization on that day."

Freshman Cadet John Paul Urizar II participated as a duck at the Brass Ceremony this year.

"I thought the Brass Ceremony was really fun," Cadet Urizar said. "Everyone was there. We were loud. We marched in. It was a big event."

Urizar's family was a part of the special day.

"My family being there was cool," Cadet Urizar said. "My dad was the one that got to pin me."

The Brass Ceremony is only the beginning of the ducks'



PHOTO BY: CAROLINE CRANE

Duck Joseph Baugher is pinned by his father at the Brass Ceremony on Sept. 28, 2024.

journey as a cadet.

"The Duck Class of 2028 has made significant strides in their time here," Colonel Cobourn said. "They're motivated, hard-working, and willing to tackle any challenge. We are proud of their accomplishments and know they will make great leaders of tomorrow."

Tackle tough topics with group study sessions

BY BRENNA DEMPSEY
Executive Producer

Group studying is a great way to find the motivation to get those painstaking assignments done.

Gathering together with other students can help hold students accountable and complete the work that can be hard to focus on when there are so many distractions around.

Studying at home can make it very easy to get sidetracked, leading students to do other things that might be more fun instead of the schoolwork that quickly piles up if it is left incomplete.

Getting out and changing the environment is a simple and effective way to concentrate on what needs to be done first.

The library has group study rooms as well as spots for individuals to study all over the building. They can be reserved ahead of time so there will be a guaranteed spot to study in.

Lindsey Rowden studies with her friends who all have different majors.

“We hold each other accountable and get all our school work done because we won’t lock in when in our rooms, so we get out and go to the library. It helps us cause it’s a quiet place,” Rowden said.

Working together with classmates to complete assignments, whether it is for individual submission or group work, can help by being able to talk freely and bounce ideas off of them.

Jon Ruppert worked on a project with his classmates, and they met up at the library to plan it out.

“Whatever you need help on, you can work on it with other people, and I think if you have more brains in the room you are able to think better and collaborate ideas together,” Ruppert said.

Talking about the same assignment with others can help give you a fresh perspective on something that might have been confusing.

This can also help grow friendships with people you might not have gotten to know under different circumstances.

This can make it even easier to get a study group together.

Friends are a big help when it comes to holding yourself accountable but sometimes they might not always be available or able to help with schoolwork that is outside of their majors.

It can be a bit stressful finding people in your major to study with, but Tarleton State University’s Supplemental Instruction (SI) program is a great place to start.

The SI leader for your course can help set you up with someone.

“If you need help don’t be afraid to reach out. There’s always other people that are willing to get together, and if you need somebody to study with that’s in your major, go to your SI and they can help you,” Rowden said.

There are also different lab rooms for tutor-

ing scattered across campus that can function as study environments and be a peaceful area to work in.

The Writing Center, Speaking Center, Math Achievement Center (MAC), Science Achievement Center (SAC) and Stephenville Accounting Lab are all available to students for free.

Even if you do not need help from the tutor, you can go study and work on assignments and ask a question if one comes up.

There are people there who are able to go over the topics and review work to make sure they are the best they can be before they get submitted. This can boost grades and relieve stress that can come from worrying about it.

If tutoring is what you are looking for and getting out is hard, virtual tutoring is something Tarleton offers so there is more accessibility and flexibility.

Studying is important to academic success so taking steps to study the way that fits yourself is a good way to go.

How to balance your school, personal life

BY ASHTYN HANSARD
Digital Media Directoor

While keeping a high GPA in college is important, it can also be dangerous. It’s important to know when to take a break and focus on your personal life.

Scholars Education lists a few different ways that over-studying can harm a student, such as lower school performance, withdraw from social activity and changes in sleeping habits.

“Over-studying can cause mental distractions and make it difficult to retain information,” Scholars Education said. “Not being able to focus during class and not being able to retain new information can seriously affect your child’s grades and participation in the classroom.”

With this information in mind, there still remains the question of how a student’s time should be divided between school and personal activities.

Many people could argue that there are many different ways to balance your school life and your personal life.

Grace Killian, a sophomore at Tarleton State University, has her own method that helps balance everything out.

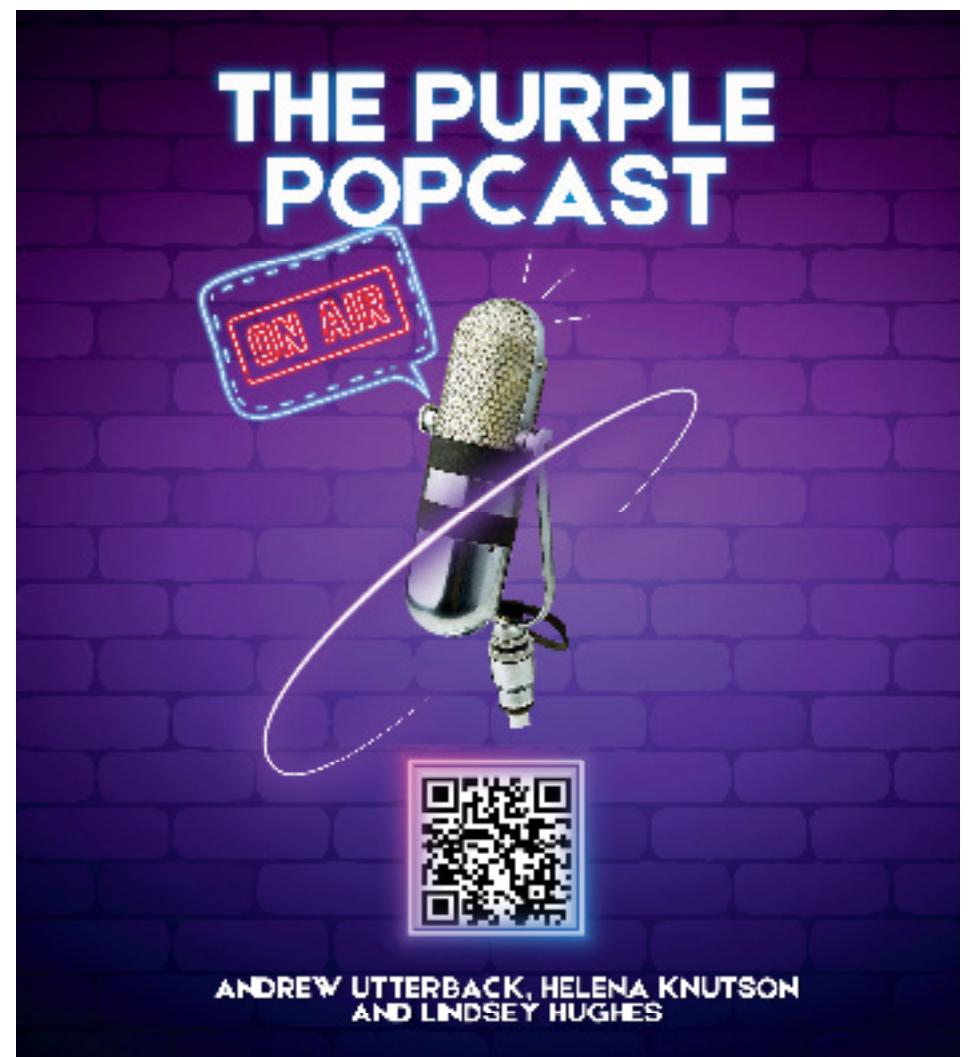
“I create a calendar that includes all of my school activities, personal commitments and assignments to keep track of everything,” Killian said. “When I feel extra busy, I make a daily to-do list of all the tasks I plan to tackle that day.”

Creating a calendar can help students stay on track and be prepared for events approaching in the future. Another tactic to help balance school life and personal life is to create a schedule.

Ryan Jones, another student at Tarleton, uses this tactic daily.

“Let the schedule be your brain so you don’t have to organize all that chaos in your head,” Jones said. “If you make a good schedule, you can work in time for yourself or your family because you know exactly what needs to get done that day. When you have a concise schedule and act on it, the time you spend on your personal life will be lifted from the stress or anxiety of the weight of school.”

School is a busy and stressful time for all, but using one of these methods may help you keep a healthy balance in your life.



COMMENTARY

Starbucks or, well, Starbucks?

BY ANNABETH JOHNSON
Multimedia Journalist

Ramen noodles, frozen meals and dining hall swipes are just a few of the staple college-life foods found in most college residencies. One of the most consumed and arguably highly important of parts of a student's diet is coffee.

Stephenville has multiple locations to get coffee such as Dunkin' Donuts, Cold Smoke and King Coffee.

I know what you are thinking, "Why isn't Starbucks on that list?"

That is because there was a new Starbucks location recently built on the North side of campus headed toward the square, and I tried it for myself.

I went to this new location and the old one by Chili's to see which Starbucks was better. Spoiler, the new location wins.

I compared both Starbucks in terms of customer service, environment and drink quality.

First off, both locations had great customer service with employees who worked hard at their jobs and looked like they

genuinely wanted to be there. They were all very kind and polite when serving me.

What tilted the scale was the Halloween spirit showcased at the new location with employees in costumes, which the old location did not participate in.

Therefore, the new Starbucks wins the customer service.

Secondly, while I do prefer the inside seating area of the old Starbucks, the new one is more convenient to access while driving.

Normally, you don't have to wait super long to turn back on Washington Street like at the old Starbucks. At the new location, there is a stoplight right up the road making it safer and quicker to pull in or leave.

Once again, the Starbucks at the new location wins.

Finally, and most importantly, after reviewing my favorite Starbucks orders, the quality of the drinks was better at the Starbucks North of town.

I tried the Caramel Cold Brew and the Pineapple Passion Fruit Lemonade Refresher at both locations, and the orders at the



PHOTO BY ANNABETH JOHNSON

The newly built Starbucks found east of campus has a very clean and modern design.

new Starbucks were richer in flavor and presented very cleanly.

Upon judging all of these elements, the Starbucks at the new location in town is more than worth trying if you have not already done so.

Who knows, it might become your favorite like it did mine.

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CONNECTIONS

Tarleton GSA builds safe spaces, support

BY CAROLINE CRAIN
News Editor

The Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) at Tarleton State University is a student-led organization promoting inclusivity and support for LGBTQ+ students and allies.

Prairie Parnell is a co-adviser for the GSA and has been with the organization since it was founded.

“GSA finds value in people’s lived experiences and welcomes the variety of those backgrounds,” Parnell said. “By championing this diversity, we cultivate a safe and welcoming campus culture.”

Established at Tarleton in 2012, the GSA has become an influential part of campus life. It ensures LGBTQ+ students and allies have a space to express themselves.

The Gay-Straight Alliance at Tarleton serves to support LGBTQIP2SAA (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning, Intersex, Pansexual, Two-Spirited, Asexual and Allies) students within the community. The group aims to provide a fun and secure environment for everyone.

“We are proud to offer a space of support and safety for students to express themselves. We are happy to connect students to information for resources on safe sex practices and health issues that concern them,” Parnell said.

The GSA holds meetings every Wednesday at 5 p.m. in the OA Grant and Humanities building room 104 with no dues or membership fees required. These gatherings feature a range of activities designed to build community.

The GSA also hosts several annual events, including “The Vagina Monologues” and Tree Wrapping in October, Transgender Day of Remembrance in November and a Pride Festival along with a 2nd Chance Prom every spring semester. These events make a much larger impact than just on campus.

“A major achievement of the GSA is our annual contribution to non-profit organizations that support the Stephenville community. For example, since beginning The Vagina Monologues project in 2014, GSA has donated over \$10,000 dollars to various organizations,” Parnell said.



PHOTO BY CAROLINE CRAIN

GSA President senior M. Schulze and Vice President senior Viviana Leos at GSA tabling in the Barry B. Thompson Student Center. Both students have been members of the organization for three years.

While the GSA has made a significant impact, it has also faced challenges. Senate Bill 17, a Texas bill passed early this year that greatly limits state universities’ ability to promote diversity and equitable access to education, challenged the GSA’s ability to maintain its presence on campus.

“Senate Bill 17 has created some challenges for students including our organization. Thankfully, we have community support that allows us to continue to provide safety and involve-

ment opportunities,” Parnell said.


Looking ahead, the GSA plans to build on its impact by expanding its initiatives.

“The GSA is excited to produce the 10th annual Vagina Monologues performances on October 18-19 and even more excited to engage in dialogue with the greater community in the spring when we host a new, unique storytelling experience built of our own monologues in April,” Parnell said.

As the GSA continues its work, it remains

focused on creating an inclusive campus. Anyone and everyone is welcome to join, as long as they bring their humanity, respect and open-mindedness.

“The GSA wants to continue its accomplishments as being an organization for all to feel safe and accepted,” Parnell said. “We want to grow within the Stephenville community as more students, more people, figure out who they are and who they choose to be.”

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