I AM A GRADUATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS OF THE PERMIAN BASIN

In high school, I lacked vision and confidence for my life until I became involved with Communities in School where I won the Phoenix Award for fighting adversity and making it to graduation. After winning that award, I changed my mindset. I decided to be my biggest supporter and go for things I wanted in life. My desire was to have a college education. I took the first step towards my goal and enrolled in Odessa College after graduating from Permian High School.

I remembered watching so many TV commercials promoting student loan consolidations and hearing my coworkers talk about how they still had student loans years after graduation. I thought to myself, you have to get a degree to get a job with better pay, but you’ll be in more debt than you were before you started college? That seemed backwards to me. I knew I wanted to continue my education and obtain a four-year degree, so I began my enrollment process and made a promise to myself that I was going to get my degree debt free.

The tuition at UTPB compared to Odessa College was obviously more. However, the amount did not discourage me. I was simply more determined to use my creativity to help me pay for my education. I decided while I was a student at UTPB, the Financial Aid office would be my second home, and it was – the staff knew me by name.

Every semester, I visited months in advance to sign up for all sorts of scholarships. Then, I revisited mid-semester to see if there were any unclaimed scholarships. My mindset was, if students were not going to take the time to investigate and take advantage of scholarships available, I will! I also joined Ballet Folklórico which was a great decision not only for the scholarships offered, but also for the ongoing support.

While at UTPB, I always had at least two jobs. One year I had four part-time jobs. I worked an office job in the morning, a cleaning job at night, taught hip-hop classes at the studio down the street from UTPB and styled hair at a salon on the weekends.

I did all this while being a full-time student and maintaining the GPA needed to keep my scholarships. I was motivated to have my cake and eat it too, and I strongly believe anyone can do the same. You just have to plan for it.

My drive is the development of my own promise to myself at the start of my college career. Moreover, it has led me to take center stage on December 13, 2014 at 2 p.m. at the Wagner Noël, knowing I do not owe anyone anything. I did it! I get to start my life after college debt free and with money in the bank.

JESSICA RIOS, 2014 BUSINESS MARKETING

ANNUAL STAFF CHRISTMAS PARTY

HR invites staff members to get their grinch on at this year’s Whoville themed Staff Christmas Party, Tues., Dec. 16 from 11:30-1:30 in the Multipurpose room. Departments are asked to prepare a gift basket for auction. All proceeds will be donated to the West Texas Food Bank. Each department is also asked to prepare a side dish to accompany our main lunch prepared by Chartwells. Look for an email from HR with more details soon.

SEXUAL ASSAULT PREVENTION OUTREACH TEAM

The Counseling Center is looking for students to join the Sexual Assault Prevention outreach team. This Spring, the team will host a series of discussions on sexual assault and related issues like sexual harassment, dating violence, domestic violence and stalking. As a student-driven project, student volunteers are needed! Spread the word and have interested students contact Dr. Harris at harris_k@utpb.edu.

JBS HOLIDAY PARTY

The John Ben Shepperd Public Leadership Institute invites all faculty and staff to their Holiday Party, Friday., Dec. 5 from 11:30-1 at their building located at 4919 E. University. Step back in time as they celebrate President Grover Cleveland’s first electric Christmas tree in the White House. Please R.S.V.P. to x2850 or jbs@utpb.edu by Dec. 1st.

HOLIDAY CELEBRATION AT THE WAGNER NOËL

Please join us Thurs., Dec. 4 at 7:30 pm for the Holiday Celebration at the Wagner Noël. Admission is free but a ticket is required. A limited number are available for pickup in the Charles A Sorber Visual Arts Studios. Contact Yvonne Drinkard to reserve your ticket, drinkard_y@utpb.edu. You may also obtain tickets at the Wagner Noël box office Monday-Friday, noon to 5 pm.
The Abilene Zoo has been keeping us updated with **Athena the Burmese Python** since her move from UTPB in October. Abilene Zoo training coordinator Liz Kellerman says Athena is doing great, looking healthy and enjoying her new friends at the zoo after completing her standard quarantine exam in late November. Athena’s new exhibit is still under construction and, as many renovations tend to be, no completion date has been set. The Abilene Zoo will keep us posted on the reveal date.

**Gregory Pysh** (Music) was awarded an ASCAP Plus Award for the 21st consecutive year. ASCAP is home to the greatest names in American music, past and present - from George Gershwin to Jay-Z - as well as thousands of writers across the entire musical spectrum. In addition to this prestigious award, Mr. Pysh was recently published in the May issue of the Choral Journal, the scholarly journal of choral music, with the article “Ikons in Sound, The Choral Music of John Tavener.” Congratulations to Greg for these great accomplishments.

UTPB student **Amanda Defrance** (standing, far right) received the Bill Archer Fellowship, a program established by UT System as a way to bring highly motivated and accomplished students to Washington, D.C. to participate in internships and take part in classes focusing on policy, economics and persuasion. Amanda made the cut through a rigorous selection process that brings only the best from Texas to Washington, D.C. Well into her fellowship, she has been exhaustingly busy making contacts through her internship and gaining invaluable experience for her post-graduate endeavors. Keep it up, Amanda!

The Accounting Office has gained a handful of new members to their team, beginning from left:

- **Denise Lujan**  
  Treasury Accountant

- **Minerva Garcia**  
  Travel & Disbursement Specialist I

- **Bobby Veail**  
  Accounts Receivable Coordinator

- **Veronica Alvarado**  
  Travel & Disbursement Specialist I

- **Estefania Coutelanc**  
  Grants Accountant

- **M’Lu Rae Washburn**  
  Cashier I

**Did You Know?**

These floating holidays act like vacation days and can be used anytime within the fiscal year. Contact HR with questions on how to use your floating holidays, personnel@utpb.edu.

**Have Something to Share?**

We’re all ears! Email events, photos, announcements and more to cole_g@utpb.edu.

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- **M’Lu Rae Washburn**  
  Cashier I
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<tr>
<th>MONDAY</th>
<th>TUESDAY</th>
<th>WEDNESDAY</th>
<th>THURSDAY</th>
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<td>CUBAN PULLED PORK</td>
<td>MEATLOAF</td>
<td>BEEF TACOS</td>
<td>CHICKEN TERIYAKI</td>
<td>CHICKEN FRIED STEAK</td>
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<td>Seasoned rice, ratatouille &amp; green beans w/ cherry tomatoes</td>
<td>Mashed potatoes, herbed zucchini &amp; stewed roma tomatoes</td>
<td>Mexi corn &amp; pinto beans</td>
<td>Chow mein noodles, snow peas &amp; szechuan medley</td>
<td>Mashed potatoes, green beans &amp; Harvard beets</td>
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<td>SWEET &amp; SOUR CHICKEN</td>
<td>SAUSAGE &amp; BELL PEPPERS</td>
<td>TURKEY TETRAZINI</td>
<td>CHICKEN MONTEREY</td>
<td>BREADED PORK CHOPS</td>
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<td>Eggs rolls, fried rice &amp; stir fry vegetable medley</td>
<td>Peas, yellow squash &amp; Harvard beets</td>
<td>Brussel sprouts, sautéed carrots &amp; lima beans</td>
<td>Roasted potatoes, broccoli &amp; cauliflower au gratin</td>
<td>Mashed sweet potatoes, green beans &amp; yellow squash</td>
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<td>CHICKEN &amp; DUMPLINGS</td>
<td>BLACKENED TILAPIA</td>
<td>CHICKEN FAJITAS</td>
<td>HERB ENCRUSTED PORK</td>
<td>BBQ BRISKET</td>
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<td>Fried okra, broccoli &amp; steamed cabbage</td>
<td>Roasted red potatoes, asparagus &amp; carrots</td>
<td>Spanish rice, refried beans &amp; mexi corn</td>
<td>Dressing, asparagus &amp; sautéed mushrooms</td>
<td>Whipped potatoes, green bean casserole &amp; zucchini</td>
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<td><strong>DECEMBER</strong></td>
<td><strong>CHRISTMAS</strong> ON THE QUAD</td>
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**THEY SAY IT’S YOUR BIRTHDAY**

Diane Post (Biology) 12/2  
Hector Govea (Institutional Research) 12/4  
Joseph Grawburg (Library) 12/5  
Ynes Alderson (Purchasing) 12/8  
Gloria Carpenter (CEED) 12/10  
Tony Love (Career Services) 12/13  
James Eldridge (Kinesiology) 12/16  
Dian Jordan-Werhane (Sociology) 12/19  
Richard Lloyd (Kinesiology) 12/21  
Rachel Harlow (Communication) 12/22  
James Holloway (Police) 12/22  
Terrance Anders (Student Services) 12/25  
Dino Galindo (Physical Plant) 12/27  
Linda Ellis (Social Sciences) 12/29  
Jan Murdock (Education) 12/30

**CHRISTMAS ON THE QUAD**

Can Food Drive  
Dec. 5th, 2014  
6PM-9PM

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT KANE_W@UTPB.EDU**

**THEMATIC EVENTS**

**LASER LIGHT SHOW**

6:00 PM  
8:20 PM  
9:00 PM

**START TIME**

**LIGHTING OF THE QUAD**

6:30 PM, Wagner Noël

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT KANE_W@UTPB.EDU**

**STAFF CHRISTMAS PARTY**

11:30-1:30, Multipurpose room