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In an effort to raise awareness and support for the LGBTQ community, the Women’s and Gender Studies Program collaborated to create the "Reordering Community," which aims to reveal challenges and areas of resilience brought about among LGBTQ individuals in the El Paso and Juarez borderlands.

In 2016, Dr. Brenda Rich, director of the Women’s and Gender Studies Program, took the initiative into exploring the complexities of various LGBTQ persons on both sides of the border.

"I felt LGBTQ history wasn’t being recorded and I wanted to take initiative into collecting and preserving that data because I was in the position to do it," Rich said.

By conducting interviews with more than 100 participants, the project first started off as a women and gender studies oral history project, where participants and students spoke about concerns dealing with family, identity, religion and activism pertaining to their experiences as a member of the LGBTQ community.

Because colleges and universities stand at the forefront of pushing progressive policies and support for students, campuses remain the ideal candidates for initiating movements and promoting change in the realm of social justice.

Rich said having people tell their stories was a very important and powerful thing to acknowledge and that universities are supposed to empathize as well as expand on new information.

"We felt it was necessary to give a voice to these people and allow them to share their own truths rather than have outsiders make their own assumptions," Rich said.

Research conducted by the women and gender studies showed that LGBTQ concerns are progressively becoming an openly accepted subject to talk about as more individuals have been increasingly coming forth to participate in the study in recent years.

As current Texas legislative proposals appear to be discriminatory and actively working against the rights of LGBTQ individuals, the issue has become a hot topic and will become more so when election season rolls around.

During the last legislative session, nearly two-dozen pieces of legislation failed to pass which would have allowed discrimination against LGBTQ people. Legislation also introduced bills that would have toughened Texas’ Religious Freedom Restoration Act and prohibited the issuance of marriage licenses for same-sex couples.

Rich said Texas is not the best state at protecting diverse people struggling with gender identity.

"Social and academic development is tied to leadership and through there is good support around, more engaged leadership is needed," Rich said.

Since religion is significantly tied to the Hispanic culture and deeply rooted in the El Paso and Juarez region, many border residents turn to religion and spirituality to cope with the many challenges.

However, according to research conducted by the Engendering Community project, many LGBTQ citations from the local community encounter discrimination due to strict religious beliefs that result in rejection and lead to a complete loss of faith and shame in some cases.

Joshua Lopez, a UTEP graduate student majoring in English and American literature, LGBTQ community member and women’s studies research assistant, said the project champions the cause by making the history of their presence known in hopes of gaining acceptance and understanding.

"The mission of this project was to illuminate El Paso on the experiences of the LGBTQ community in the El Paso and Juarez borderlands," Lopez said. "The community and UTEP students learn that we have our presence in history, and we are trying to implement what is rightfully ours."

In an effort to acknowledge the Engendering Community project, the Centennial Museum will be showcasing an exhibit displaying donated items that LGBTQ members associated with their experiences from June to Sept. 19.

The project, along with the Women’s and Gender Studies Program, will also participate in other future events to be held later this year that involve discussions associated with current policy changes that include Texas LGBTQ rights forums, tolerance lectures and poetry reading workshops.

"Talking and hearing stories are important. They allow us to give voice to those who were voiceless, make that which was invisible visible and allow us to gain new perspectives," Lopez said. "It all starts through listening and engaging with our stories."
Pano was the first place we actually came face to face with indigenous cultures. There was a mixture of traditional and modern attire. Also, most people spoke either Quechua or Aymara, along with Spanish. Everyone on the streets seemed to be a salesperson, mainly the women, selling everything from guinea pigs to trinkets—all aimed at tourists.

I recovered from my sickness just in time for a tour of Lake Titicaca. We took the Andes, where the locals shared a meal with us, performed music, danced and wore clothing, which they offered for sale. We also visited the famous Uros floating islands. The Uros seemed to have a routine ready for when our group arrived, which made sense because the money from tourism is how they survive. We didn’t mind.

After some spending time in Cusco, we did a homestay for five days with families in a village named Tullio. Surrounded by mountains, lakes and tons of animals, the natural beauty of the village was enchanting. It made the freezing nights bearable.

The people there are known as the Quechua, which is the name of the main language as well. Some people know Spanish, but not nearly just the men. There, we were paired up with a classmate and a family to live with. My family was very young, the father was only 35 years old, and he had a five-year-old son. They had a 1-year-old daughter who was very shy.

During the day we would work on the documentary, have class and eat meals with our families. There were always potatoes incorporated in each meal and I tried plenty of new dishes like Alpaca and Guinea pigs, both considered Peruvian delicacies.

We got to spend time helping the elementary school build a cafeteria for the kids by carrying adobe bricks down a hill. It was a wonderful way to leave our mark in the community. The children were very energetic and always curious as to what I was doing with my camera. The whole community was extremely welcoming and even when a language was a barrier, the sentiment overwhelmed us.

Homestays have a great individual impact. I now appreciate little things I commonly take for granted, like taking in a house with heaters and warm water.

After staying in Titicaca, we took a bike through the extremely hot and humid Inca Trail in Santa Teresa. Every part of my body was sweating and all I could think about was how grateful I was to be out of the cold.

Before ending our trip in Lima, we spent a night in Aquasacuay in order to get a tour of Peru’s historical sanctuary Machu Picchu. It was surreal to get to walk around the Inca ruins and learn about what was believed to have taken place there over 600 years ago.

Most of Peru seems to flourish off of tourism while still preserving its history and rich culture. I would love to go back and I’m grateful I had the experience to study in another country.

I built new friendships and learned a lot about how the I was physically and mentally pushed myself. Most importantly, I now have a newfound perspective on what it’s like to be a tourist without imposing on anyone’s life, which is an important lesson that not everyone gets to receive.

If it weren’t for UTEP’s study abroad program who knows if I would’ve ever gotten the chance to see Peru? You have the chance to study abroad, jump in on it before it’s too late.

Michelle Horns may be reached at mhornse@utep.edu.

Do it! Take the trip

BY MICHAELA ROMAN
The Prospectors
Study abroad builds cosmopolitan students

BY JUAN RAYCOZA
The Prospector

According to a NAFA study, the number of students abroad has grown by 2 percent nationally. In the 2011-2012 academic year, the number of students participating in study-abroad programs increased from 283,352 to 289,500 students.

A statistical report from the University of California, Merced, showed that 97 percent of students enrolled in study-abroad programs are more likely to find jobs within 12 months after graduation, compared to 49 percent of college graduates in that same period. That same study showed that 94 percent of students who studied abroad had high-valuable skills for the job market.

In the NAFA study, it was shown that Caucasians make up the majority of students taking advantage of the study-abroad programs nationally (60 percent), with Hispanics coming in second place (13 percent).

Larios said that this also the case at UTEP. However, the university has a very diverse population, in some instances, Hispanics have taken the lead, but have been closely followed by Caucasians as well.

Sophomore business major Roman Robles said he is eager to study abroad.

"There is no way to describe the things you experience when studying abroad," Robles said.

"I am very interested in going into other countries in order to study, since I would most likely end up working for a business where I graduate. I would already know how to communicate and understand other cultures."

Junior art major Maria Mendoona also said she would benefit from going into a study-abroad program, but she said she is still uninterested regarding the programs.

"I am very interested in studying in another country and get a different experience of the education there," Mendoona said. "I am just to scared maybe my credit won't transfer or something like that."

Electrical Engineering major, Alix Nunez looks over study abroad brochures.

IN BRIEF
STUDENTS INVITED TO CREATE UTEP'S 25TH ANNUAL MINERPALOOZA

UTEP students are invited to participate in a poster to design this year Minerpalooza Poster. The contest runs from Monday, June 15, through Sunday, July 5. For more information visit minerva2012.com or contact the Office of Student Life at 915-444-5648.

FOSTER HOMELESS ADOPTED RESOURCES DONATION DRIVE

FHAR donation drive from June 22, through July 2. All donations are to be dropped off at the Academic Advising Center on Hawthorne Street, El Paso, TX. Food and clothing items are not recommended donations.
History and progress at center of D.C. Pride Parade

BY SARAH FULTON
SHFWire
WASHINGTON – Everything around Dupont Circle, from hair to poppies was rainbow Saturday as an estimated 150,000 spectators packed the streets for the 40th annual D.C. Pride Parade.

Hosted by the Capital Pride Alliance, the parade of 186 groups marched 1.5 miles in three-hours.

“The fact that we have had this around for 40 years is wonderful. It is a testament to how the community has grown, changed and developed over these last 40 years,” Bernie Delia, Capital Pride Alliance board president, said. Deacon Maccubbin, who served as a grand marshal, held the first Washington pride festival outside his shop, Lambda Rising, in 1975. Delia said that time was not favorable for the gay community.

“It was not really that long ago that the community was far from accepted. There were criminal statutes against same-sex relationships,” Delia said.

“There were people who were fired from their jobs with their federal government because they either were or were perceived as homosexual.”

Themed “flashback,” this year’s parade was intended to celebrate the country’s progress since then.

“We think it is always important to look back, especially on these marks, anniversaries. It is a chance to look back and see where we came from and when we are going to be,” Delia said.

This year George Currant, who works for a corporate travel company, and Sean Franklin, who works for a technology consulting group, were married on a float in front of the judges’ stand. They live in New York.

For the second year in a row a U.S. Armed Forces color guard led the parade. Before last year, no military guard had participated in a pride parade. Through the organization Scouts for Equality, Boy Scouts and Girls Scouts also marched for the first time.

“This year we had a ‘family fun zone’ meant to cater to the changing needs of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community.

“One of the ways it is growing and changing is there are more same-sex families who have children. We wanted to provide them with a place to grow and enjoy,” Delia said.

Mark Hegedus, 51, of Washington, a lawyer at the Federal Trade Commission, normally marches with the Gay Men’s Chorus. However, this year he joined his nephew, Kyle Hegedus, 23, and other family members on the sidelines at their first pride parade.

“What is amazing is the sense of accomplishment,” Mark Hegedus said.

The number of people who came out in support had an impact on Sholeh Mohbibi, 61, a retired Virginia teacher who now lives in Washington.

“It is really good that as many people support it,” Mohbibi said.

Reach reporters Sarah Fulton or Sarah.Fulton@scripps.com or 202-885-1975. SHFWire is free to any news organization that gives the reporter a byline and credits SHFWire.com for the story.

BY JUAN RAYOZA
The Prospector
Come this fall, the brand-new Miner Canyon student housing complex will be ready for students to move in.

As part of a $23-million project, the new dorms will feature 83 units able to house approximately 352 students in bedroom residences that will range from single-person efficiencies to four and six-bedroom suites for students to live in.

Charles Gibbens, director of housing, said the new and ambitious project will be ready by late July. He also said the entire project cost of $23 million dollars includes the site preparation, construction and all the furnishings as well.

The only requirement to live in Miner Canyon will be the same as it is with Miner Village and Miner Heights—being a registered UTEP student. However, during the summer the university receives students who come to do research from other countries and they are allowed to get housing during the summer because there are a lot of vacancies during that time.

These new dormitories will be available to students and athletes equally and will not have any special preferences to athletes as has been rumored. However, with that being said, the athletic department requires all first-year scholarship athletes to live on campus, so housing and the athletic department do work closely to reserve spaces for those student-athletes.

Miner Canyon will not be a traditional dormitory as the ones that already exist on campus. The facility will have many special features, or as Gibbens says, “state-of-the-art student housing.”

According to Gibbens, national research has shown that students graduate at a higher rate when they live on campus because of the positive peer pressure that exists. The design of this facility will be specifically to have the old features of student dormitories, but coupled with the new living/learning laboratories. The lobby area will be a place where everybody can interact and will be equipped with TVs, dry-erase boards and moveable furnishings.

The purpose of this lobby area, according to Gibbens, is to have a lot of community space so students can get to know each other and mingle with each other. Those lobby areas will make study areas a lot more efficient than those available in the other housing complexes. Also at the end of each floor will be individual study rooms.

All rooms will be fully furnished they will be equipped with wireless application protocols (WAP) for every two students, Internet protocol telephone service, three different study areas on each floor equipped with 70-inch TV monitors, which will be useful to practice presentations or work on group projects, a computer lab and printing stations.

“Everything we do is about developing an environment that is conducive to academic success,” Gibbens said.

Although these apartments were designed in collaboration with students, faculty and staff at the university to better fill students, some current students at UTEP felt those funds could have served a better purpose.

Senior meteorological engineering major Pedro Cruz said that it would be better to invest those millions on labs or maybe reducing the cost of tuition.

“A clear example is the department of metallurgy, classrooms and laboratories are ancient there,” Cruz said. “In fact this semester they canceled two labs for lack of equipment.”

Cruz also said the prestige of UTEP will be higher with these state-of-the-art dormitories, but he said there are a lot of things that need improving at UTEP as well.

Senior multimedia journalist Daniel Alvarez said he would surely enjoy living in a high-tech dormitory complex at least for a semester before he graduates.

“I live at home, but it would be cool to live in that new dormitory just to be from the first generation to do so,” Alvarez said. “I’ll inform myself when the project is finished.”

Juan Rayoza may be reached at jrayoza@utep.edu.

SHFWire.com: Like the Scripps Howard Foundation Wire Interns on Facebook and follow us on Twitter.

SHFWire: The State-of-the-art dormitories to open in August
The "Engendering Community" Exhibit will be held at the UTEP Centennial Museum until Sept. 19.

BY FERNANDA LEON

The Prospector

The first exhibit in El Paso to highlight the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer community is now open to the public. The exhibit is a progressive move toward recognition among the LGBTQ community in the Sun City as their artistic endeavors are presented to the rest of the El Paso community.

The UTEP Centennial Museum and Chihuahuan Desert Gardens will be displaying the "Engendering Community" exhibit from June 2 to Sept. 19, showcasing the artistic work that depicts the struggles, triumphs and lifestyle of El Paso’s LGBTQ demographic, covering topics from same-sex marriage to gender identity.

Jose Galeano, junior art major, said it is very important to have an exhibit of this nature in the city.

"This could help many people to comprehend more about the topic and that way they can represent and support the LGBTQ community without judging or offending," said Galeano.

The items in the exhibit are objects that the LGBTQ community from El Paso and Cd. Juarez have donated. These items mark their experiences.

"We have photographs, a drag queen’s gown, a trans person’s chest binder, journals, among other items," said Joshua Lopez, English and American literature graduate student.

Lopez is also a researcher and participant with the "Engendering Community" exhibit.

Among the other things that the public will find in the exhibit are newspaper articles from El Paso Times that relate to LGBTQ activities. There are also items that feature the LGBT organizations on campus.

The history of the LGBTQ community is an important aspect that the exhibit wants to portray.

"Telling and hearing stories is important," Lopez said. "They allow us to give voice to those who have not been seen, or those that are invisible, and we gain new perspectives."

The LGBTQ community has gone through many struggles and it can still be marginalized for many people.

"The LGBTQ community in El Paso is a topic that is still very closed-in, where people are judgmental with Lopez also said the exhibit will bring awareness to UTEP students and the community in general of the presence that the LGBTQ community has in history and their efforts to have the same rights as everyone.

"We have broken many schemes in different social problems, but it’s already time to break the scheme of keeping the LGBTQ community hidden," Galeano said.

The Centennial Museum and Chihuahuan Desert Gardens at UTEP are open from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Tuesdays through Saturdays. You can reach us at (915) 747-5565.

For more information about the exhibit, "Engendering Community," visit museum.utep.edu or call (915) 747-5565.

By Fernanda Leon may be reached at theprospectordaily.com.

Local businesses work to ensure summer fun safety

BY JOSE SOTO

The Prospector

The sun is blazing, the days are long and the heat is ever rising. Summer is in full effect in the Sun City. That means El Pasoans are taking the streets to enjoy the hot summer months. The people of El Paso are out and about enjoying themselves now more than any other season with many events to choose from, many of which are party oriented.

Many clubs, bars, restaurants and businesses host daytime pool parties, brunches and other events that attract the summer crowd. This obviously entails alcohol consumption.

According to a study conducted by the Foundation For Advancing Alcohol Responsibility, June and August were the deadliest months on the road in 2013. Furthermore, 43 percent of traffic-related fatalities during the summer were from drunk driving and there were more high-blood alcohol content fatal traffic crashes during August than any other month of the year.

To ensure the safety of those partaking in these party-oriented events, some locations are taking special measures. Kenji Shigematsu, one of the partners from The Garden, said the location has reitered proper training for their security.

"We’ve gone through old procedures with our security staff and have implemented new ones as well," Shigematsu said. "We make sure our staff knows exactly what to do while working any event held here."

Shigematsu also said The Garden has increased their security staff for the summer party events.

"Along with more security, we also hire undercover police to secure the surrounding area," Shigematsu said.

The Garden’s bartenders also go through extra training during the summer months.

"We make sure that every bartender is up to par with TABC (Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission) policies and procedures," Shigematsu said. "They also go through proper training in order to identify when someone has had too much to drink. That way, we can stop serving them before they become completely intoxicated."

Shigematsu said The Garden also enforces proper dress code in order to prevent any illegal firearms or weapons from being introduced into the venue. "It is also to attract a well behaved crowd," he said.

Like the Garden, Malolam also has increased their security staff. Adriano Castillo, manager at Malolam, said they have hired more security for the summer, especially for their newly implemented brunch parties.

"The brunch has attracted more people during the daytime, so we’ve hired more daytime security," said Castillo. "Then we bring in more security once the night crowd starts coming in."

Malolam also said Malolam bartenders have also gone through proper training to ensure their attendees don’t over-consume alcohol.

"It’s important for us to maintain the good behavior of our crowd," Castillo said. "Our bartenders know how to tell when someone has had too much to drink. Our bussers and servers do as well. We all communicate with each other to ensure that no one is getting over-served. Once someone shows signs of inebriation, we cut them off."

Castillo said Malolam has so far had “good luck” with their summer parties.

"Luckily, nothing unfortunate has happened," Castillo said.

While bars and restaurants do their part to ensure everything goes well inside their establishment, the El Paso Sheriff’s Department will be doing their part to ensure everything goes well outside as well.

Sgt. Michael Lara said the department is well prepared to handle the summertime party crowd.

"The department does have plans in place to help curb any partying problem," Lara said. "We have enough units out to help maintain control."

Lara said the department is also equipped to respond to any situations that may happen at the outskirts of town.

"We have off-road vehicles and a portable lighting system powered by a generator," Lara said. "They have used this equipment on many occasions when responding to situations that occur in the desert area off of Montana such as Red Sands."

Saraann Hernandez, junior psychology major, is one of many who will be partaking in the summer partying.

"As college students, there are always many invites to attend pool parties, cook-outs, parties at bars," Hernandez said. "It’s obvious that many young El Pasans are going to be attending many of these events. The trick is to know exactly what you are doing and what your limit is."

Hernandez said knowing the difference between alcoholic beverages is also crucial.

"You've got to know what it is that you're drinking and how it affects you," Hernandez said. "There are people differently than a cocktail, for example. You've got to know your drink."

Both Malolam and The Garden offer transportation services to those who have had too much to drink. "If you let us know, we’ll find a way to get you home safely," Castillo said. "We are happy to provide rides to people who recognize that they have had "too much."

Both Castillo and Shigematsu encourage partygoers to drink enough water between alcoholic beverages, to party on a full stomach and designate a sober driver.

For a free ride home, call (915) 212-7777.
Festival challenges local filmmakers to produce film in 48 hours

BY JULIA HETTGER

The Prospector

Most films take months or even years to be produced. Some films take years just to be conceptualized. However, one local film festival will challenge this notion.

The Gristlight Creative 48-hour Film Festival will challenge local filmmakers to work under pressure in order to shoot, produce and edit their films in a short amount of time. Started in 2010, the creative minds behind the festival made it their goal to give artists in the El Paso region a chance to take their creativity to the next level by encouraging them to create new projects.

"We thought creative storytellers should have a reason to start and finish their own project," said Ray Sanchez, principal director of Gristlight Creative.

There are only a few requirements for filmmakers to enter the festival.

"To participate, someone needs only to register, have a way to record video, even an iPhone will work, and be able to upload the video in the format we require for judging and public screening," Sanchez said.

The goal of the festival is to allow artistic minds to tap into their creative juices and use the time to focus entirely on their project. Sanchez said this helps them to focus on a story rather than the visual effects of the film.

"A time frame of 48 hours to make an eight-minute movie virtually ensures that a story gets started and finished," Sanchez said. "The focus must be on the plot and how well a director can tell a short story, and things like special effects, elaborate sets, meticulous rehearsing or multiple takes on a scene take a back seat.

Some advice Sanchez has for participants is to incorporate someone on their team to keep production organized.

"I advise participants to add the role of producer to their team roster, which is someone who keeps the production moving on schedule," Sanchez said.

"He or she should be a strong personality and not a pushover," Sanchez adds.

Sanchez also advises participants to use the same setting for the film and to get into post-production quickly.

"Shooting in the same general vicinity helps, as does getting into post-production as soon as possible," Sanchez said. "Saturday afternoon is good and save four to six hours for upload."

Many UTEP students have participated in the film slams in the past. Daniel Fuentes, senior digital media production major, will be participating this year.

"One of the reasons why I decided to participate in this 48-hour film slam competition was to get, in a way, real experience of how the process of producing quality forms of media to an audience in a short deadline works in the real world such as TV news," Fuentes said.

"There are many aspects to creating films, such as acting and production. Fuentes broke down the production process into three major sections.

"The art of filmmaking is divided into three parts of production: the first stage is called pre-production. This is the longest stage of the three, and it is where all the first arrangements for producing a film takes place such as writing, casting, location scouting, getting permission of authorities for filming in such locations, planning out the scenes and the schedule in which they will be filmed as well as thinking of all the little details such as housing and food service to all the crew members," Fuentes said.

The other parts include the filming and editing.

"The second stage is called production, and it is the stage in which the filming takes place," Fuentes said. "The last, but not least, is post-production, and it is the one where the footage taken from the filming goes into editing so the story can come together and make sense."

Fuentes said the challenge of completing the film process in 48 hours could both help and hinder creativity.

"We know that the process of making a quality eight-minute entertain- ing and engaging short film is not going to be easy, yet our team and I are not discouraged that we can produce something interesting, entertaining and engaging to us, the audience and the judges," Fuentes said.

According to Fuentes, completing an eight-minute film in 48 hours can help him with his creative process, but also presents roadblocks.

"We know that this challenge can certainly help creativity in many ways because it gives us freedom to produce something we believe in and that we would like to show to an audience," Fuentes said. "But, just as everything, short deadlines can also be an obstacle for creativity because outside factors such as stress and tiredness can result in mind blocks that can hinder the project."

Filming will take place between June 26 and June 28. Screenings of the films will be on July 17 at the El Paso Community Foundation. To register for the film slam, visit www.gristlightfest.com/details.

Julia Hettger may be reached at jhettger@elpasotimes.com.
Rotich does it again!

Track and field wraps up season at NCAA Championships

BY JUAN CARLOS NAVARRETE

The Prosector

UTEP track and field's season has come to an end after the 2015 NCAA Outdoor Championships. Of the four Miner athletes who traveled to Eugene, Oregon, senior Anthony Rotich was the most successful.

Rotich was not only looking to be the first to finish inside the top 10 in an event for UTEP, he was taking the track in search of his third-consecutive Steeplechase National Championship.

For Rotich, the race was different than what he had been running before. The race was much more competitive and had many runners fall—including one of Rotich's running mates.

"This one was a little different from what I had been doing every year," Rotich said. "This one I had to run by myself after one of my friends fell down. I did not have an option."

Losing the man he was hoping would pace the race, Rotich was forced to take the lead for most of the competition.

With about 100 meters to go, fellow Kenyan Stanley Kebenei would take the lead briefly, putting Rotich's three-peat in serious danger. That's when the Miner hit another gear and was able to secure the win.

"The prophecy is fulfilled," UTEP distance coach Paul Ereng said. "This is the most wonderful victory he's had. A lot of people were trying to put pressure on him and he came through."

Rotich finishes his career at UTEP as only the third—second in UTEP history—to bring home a title.

By Luis Gonzalez

Paul Thomas ready to contribute: 'It's really all about the team'

I think me and Vince are two totally different players," Thomas said. "He's a really great player and I'm obviously not there yet."

Hunter, UTEP's leading scorer and rebounder last year, was a natural power forward who was almost unstoppable in the paint. Ford looked to take full advantage of Hunter's athleticism by playing him over long stretches of time at the small forward position.

Thomas is a more natural small forward, who appears to be more comfortable playing outside of the paint than the man who he will try to help replace.

"My most intriguing skill would be my length and versatility," Thomas said. "Being able to space the floor out for driving lanes. I'm just a versatile guy, who can put the ball on the floor and create plays."

Thomas was heavily recruited before ultimately deciding he would wear the orange and blue. He had offers from programs like the University of Memphis, the University of Houston and Texas Tech. Members of Conference USA like Rice and Western Kentucky were also looking to secure the services of Thomas for the 2015-16 season.

The prophecy is fulfilled. This is the most wonderful victory he's had.

"Rasmus simply had a bad day today," said Miner head coach Mike Lusko. "Season's worst performance here. He just looked flat."

Maukonen finished in 20th place with an All-American Honorable Mention for his performance.

Senior Jullycia Pearson wore the orange and blue for the last time in Eugene, competing in the heptathlon.

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"Rasmus simply had a bad day today," said Miner head coach Mike Lusko. "Season's worst performance here. He just looked flat."

Maukonen finished in 20th place with an All-American Honorable Mention for his performance.

Senior Jullycia Pearson wore the orange and blue for the last time in Eugene, competing in the heptathlon.
The Miners had another thrower participate at the national competition. Freshman Samantha Hall, who this year has been ranked inside the top-10 in the country, went to Eugene to compete in the discuss throw.

After finishing on her first two attempts, Hall launched the discuss 53.15 meters. The throw was just outside of the top nine, who get to throw three more times. That would be her only official throw of the tournament. It was still good enough for 13th place.

“This was a great experience for Samantha--a great year for her overall,” Laaksonen said. “Expectations will be really high for her next year and she learned a lot.”

Hall has been named a Second Team All-American for her throw at the NCAA Championships. Although she did not finish in the top 10, the Miners have a lot of time left at UTEP and can become a better thrower after this.

The Miners’ track season has now come to a close and it left fans with a lot to cheer and talk about. It is a group that will be losing key seniors, but many of the team’s best are still undeclared seniors.

Through the Miners did not win the outdoor conference title, both the men and women finished second in C-USA and the women were first in the indoor season earlier in the year.

The season may be over, but the team is left with a lot to celebrate. Coach Cilia Borden may be reached at cilia.borden@utep.edu.