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VOLUME 121, ISSUE 50
TUESDAY, MARCH 2, 2021

Residents displaced



PAGE 6

Students say they had to leave their homes for renovations with little notice from The Quarters.

CONNOR DOWNS / THE DAILY TEXAN STAFF



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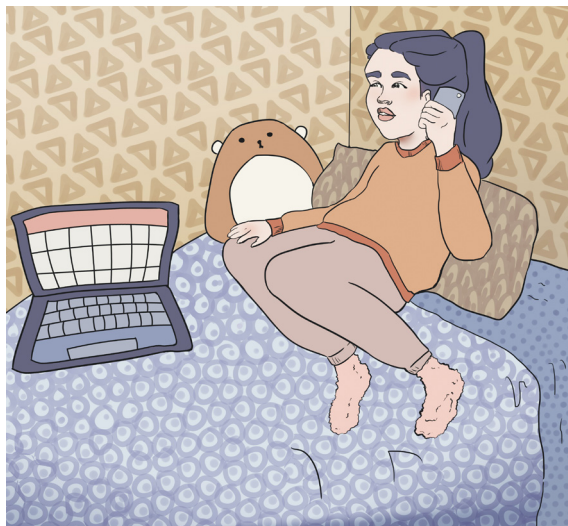
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CAMPUS

CMHC expands online scheduling opportunities



EMMA GEORGE / THE DAILY TEXAN STAFF

By Kiernan McCormick
 @KiernanMcCormick4

The Counseling and Mental Health Center began offering online scheduling for brief assessment appointments for the first time Feb. 10.

A brief assessment appointment is a 15-20 minute phone call where students can discuss mental health needs and possible treatment options with a counselor. Prior to Feb 10., students could only schedule brief assessments over the phone. Students can now make an appointment through their MyCMHC web portal on the CMHC website.

Marla Craig, senior associate director for clinical services at CMHC, said CMHC has discussed the introduction of online scheduling for brief assessment appointments for years. She said one of the main motivations behind implementing online scheduling was students' requests.

"Sometimes we can implement ideas right away," Craig said. "Other times, it takes longer because it impacts other services or it impacts delivery. ... We've been trying to figure out how we would do that, because technologically it's just been a lot more challenging for us to figure out how to do that."

Katy Redd, associate director for prevention, development and media relations at CMHC, said

online scheduling makes the brief assessment appointment process easier for students.

"Basically, (online scheduling) introduces another level of convenience and flexibility into our clinical system for students," Redd said. "We're not taking anything away. Students can still call, they can still — in non-COVID times — walk into the counseling center and get their needs met right away."

Psychology junior Nimisha Jain said she thinks online scheduling reduces the anxiety some students experience when scheduling a brief assessment appointment over the phone.

"I think the assessment policy is really effective and I think it can really help people who might be too nervous to call in because they're feeling anxious," Jain said. "I know a lot of the times I've had to use (phone scheduling) with my friends and make the call for them."

Redd said CMHC recognizes the pandemic has heightened mental health struggles for many students, due to financial concerns, school, housing and socialization.

Craig said CMHC aims to use online scheduling to support students regardless of their circumstances. "I just want us to be there as a support for our students and to be as accessible as possible," Craig said. "And to be able to use whatever technological means we can to make sure that we are available to them."

CONTACT US

MAIN TELEPHONE
 (512) 471-4591

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
 Emily Caldwell
 (512) 232-2212
 editor@dailytexanonline.com

MANAGING EDITOR
 Trinady Joslin
 (512) 232-2217
 managingeditor@thedailytexan.com

NEWS OFFICE
 (512) 232-2207
 news@thedailytexan.com

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TOMORROW
 March 3



HI 70°
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mood: piles of color palette screenshots on the desktop

COVID-19

COVID-19 vaccine confusion

Unofficial COVID-19 vaccine sign-up link caused thousands to make invalid appointments.

By Lauren Abel & Kevin Vu
@laurena0324, @Kevin_Vu_

Hundreds lined up outside Gregory Gym on Monday after thousands of individuals who do not qualify for the COVID-19 vaccine made an appointment after a scheduling link was unofficially spread.

UT Health Austin was notified of an active vaccine scheduling link that was being shared through unofficial networks across the UT community, the University said in a statement Monday. This form resulted in thousands of individuals signing up for appointments who did not follow the UT Health Austin registration process,

the statement said. UT Health Austin is only vaccinating individuals in Phase 1A and Phase 1B who have completed the Vaccination Request Form.

“All appointments scheduled in this manner are in the process of being canceled,” the statement said. “However, some individuals have showed up on-site today, resulting in longer than normal lines.”

Susan Hochman, associate director for assessment, communications and health information technology for University Health Services said in an email that the link was shared by individuals who received it through the UT online scheduling system.

“The link was intended only for the use of individuals who had completed an online eligibility survey and who fit the 1A and 1B vaccination prioritization criteria as designated by the Texas Department of State Health Services,” Hochman said.

According to a UT Health Austin statement, the issue with the link was the result of the extended weather

emergency. The form typically has individualized links for specific patients, but it was suspended to allow for quicker registration, though it has since been reinstated, they said.

Julie Nguyen, an administrative associate for the educational psychology department, said she received the link to register for a vaccine from a colleague who said extra vaccinations were available. Nguyen, who does not qualify for Phase 1A or 1B, said she was not given any screening questions when she made the appointment.

“When I had signed up originally I thought it was a free for all and that you didn’t necessarily have to be in either phase because, like I said, (my colleague)

had mentioned that they had vaccines they needed to get rid of,” Nguyen said.

After some of her colleagues received cancellation emails for their appointments, Nguyen decided not to show up.

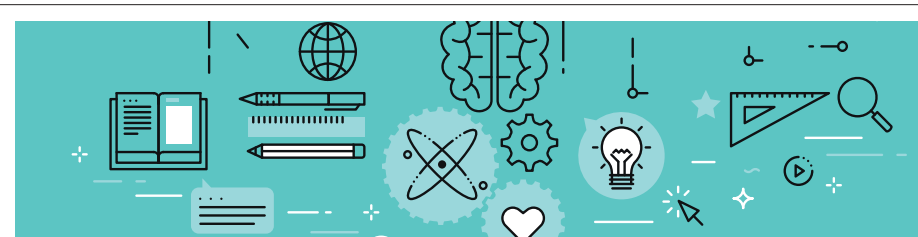
Cedar Creek resident Savannah Beauregard said she waited in line for 90 minutes after signing up with the link. She said she left when a volunteer told those in line that their appointments would be canceled if they did not complete a survey when signing up.

“From what I understand, they said that thousands more people showed up than they even expected, because they were still going through the beginning of the 9 a.m. appointments when they told us at 11 (a.m.),” Beauregard said.



ANDREW ZAMORA / THE DAILY TEXAN STAFF

People wait in line outside of Gregory Gym for the COVID-19 vaccine Monday. Thousands of individuals who were scheduled to receive the vaccine were at risk of having their appointment canceled.



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FORUM

Disability on campus

Centering the discussion around equity and accessibility on campus.

By Maria Sailale
& Daisy Kielty
Forum Editors

This week we want to highlight the experiences of students with disabilities and hear from students who are working to make our campus a more inclusive and

accessible place.

While UT continues to promote rhetoric that celebrates the diversity of its student body, disability is a topic that is often left out of the conversation.

Whether or not all students feel welcome on campus, whether or not they face preventable barriers to success and whether or not their rights are respected are all factors that reflect the values

of these Forty Acres.

As students, we are also responsible for shaping the kind of community UT should be. We have an obligation to make our campus an inclusive space, and that requires centering disability rights advocacy in our discussions.

In this forum, Caroline Graves, a government and public relations senior, and Shilpa Rajagopal, a biology

and marketing senior, urge UT to establish a Disability Cultural Center.

Annie Reckart, advocacy director for Longhorn Best Buddies, raises awareness for the international "Spread the Word to End the R-Word" campaign.

As always, if you have any thoughts on this topic or any other, please feel free to reach out to us at thedaily-texanforum@gmail.com.



EMILY MACCORMACK / THE DAILY TEXAN STAFF

FORUM

FORUM

'Nothing about us, without us'

By Caroline Graves
& Shilpa Rajagopal
Contributors

difficult and isolating.

The onus for creating an inclusive, enriching environment for disabled students at a university, though, should not be on student organizations alone. While Services for Students with Disabilities is another main resource for students with disabilities at UT, it predominantly focuses on the necessary yet narrow task of providing accommodations and assistive technology. That is why it is important for UT to establish a Disability Cultural Center.

A Disability Cultural Center at UT would create a permanent community building and organizing space for disabled students. This center could house meeting areas, a library, workshops focused on disability justice and much more. The Multicultural Engagement Center and Gender and Sexuality Center, both established through student

advocacy, already provide examples of what this space could be. Moreover, there's precedent for Disability Cultural Centers: Institutions like the University of Washington, the University of Arizona and others have built these centers on their campuses.

We have a saying in disability advocacy circles: "Nothing about us, without us." There are disabled students at this University. By establishing a Disability Cultural Center, UT has a chance to not only recognize that saying, but also to strengthen its commitment to addressing disability as an aspect of diversity, promoting equity, inclusion and accessibility in the process.

Graves is a government and public relations senior from Austin, Texas. Rajagopal is a biology and marketing senior from Irvine, California.

Working to end the use of the R-word on campus

By Annie Reckart
Contributor

I am the advocacy director for Longhorn Best Buddies, an organization that is centered around advocacy, friendship and employment for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Best Buddies is an organization that has impacted myself, as well as many others, to not just be more involved but to become an advocate. Best Buddies is an international organization, and the program at The University of Texas at Austin is one of the largest, if not the largest, in the country.

Over the past few years, we have taken on the campaign "Spread the Word to End the R-Word." The R-word hurts because it is exclusive, offensive and derogatory. Our campaign asks people to pledge to stop saying the R-word as

a starting point toward creating more accepting attitudes and communities for all people.

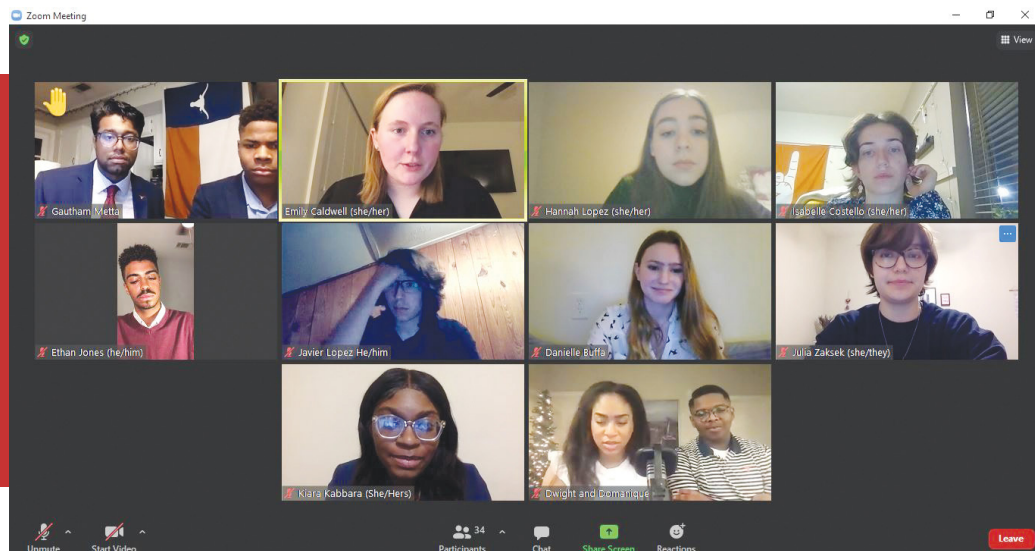
As we approach national Spread the Word day on March 3, my team and I have been reaching out to various organizations in order to encourage each member to take the pledge to end the R-word. Over 800,000 people across over 80 countries have already committed to discourage use of the R-word and to remove it from everyday language.

Additionally, Longhorn Best Buddies has partnered with UT Student Government in sponsoring a piece of legislation to establish the negative nature of the word and combat its use among UT students and faculty. With all these efforts, we are hoping to foster greater acceptance so that everyone in our community can feel valued, respected and included.

Reckart is an exercise science sophomore from Austin, Texas.

STUDENT GOVERNMENT

Student Government candidates talk platform points



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The Student Government debate hosted via Zoom on March 1. The four executive alliances debated virtually on issues including lack of transparency between students and Student Government, improving access to resources for students and restructuring the student experience.

By **Sheryl Lawrence**
@sheryl_adelle

Candidates for the 2021-22 student body president and vice president discussed key points of their campaigns at the Student Government debate Monday evening.

The four executive alliances debated virtually on issues including lack of transparency between students and Student Government, improving access to resources for students, and restructuring the student experience.

Universitywide representative candidates, who will work in the legislative branch of Student Government, were given one minute by The Daily Texan's opinion board at the beginning of the debate to discuss their platforms. The Universitywide representative candidates focused on

increasing services from the Counseling and Mental Health Center, expanding COVID-19 pass/fail options, and providing financial stability for students.

In their opening statements, candidates for the executive alliance discussed plans on how they will help students during their term. Students in attendance were also able to ask questions.

Executive alliance candidates focused primarily on increasing transparency between Student Government, University administration and students, increasing access to mental health services, and addressing the University's racist history.

Presidential candidate Dwight Peton, who is running with Domanique Williams, said one of the biggest challenges facing students is inaccessibility to resources.

"If you don't have

accessibility to housing or to food, that affects your mental ability," said Williams, an architectural engineering senior. "Expanding the amount of resources we have for UT students, specifically during the pandemic ... is very important to us, and that's our main target to attack."

Presidential candidate Gautham Metta, who is running with Quenton Stokes, said they want to restructure student orientation.

"(There are) many individual examples of students who have come together and achieved change," finance junior Metta said. "We want to re-educate everyone through orientation so they can learn about these measures, so that they can be empowered to change the world themselves."

Metta and Stokes said they have not previously been a part of Student Government,

which Stokes said gives them a "unique perspective to Student Government and how (they) can solve these issues."

Vice presidential candidate Danielle Buffa, who is running with Javier Lopez, said they want to use at least \$10,000 of the Student Government budget as donations to the UT Outpost.

Buffa and Lopez said throughout the debate they want to have students talk directly to University administration with their issues.

"Every single student at UT, not just the leaders of orgs ... would be able to show up and voice their concerns directly to us, to the executive agencies and to a representative from the Office of the Dean of Students," said Buffa, political communication sophomore.

Presidential candidate Kiara Kabbara, who is

running with Ethan Jones, said they are committed to supporting low-income students, specifically by adding support for Riverside.

"The recent winter storm ... demonstrated the University needs to support Riverside and the community," government junior Kabbara said. "Therefore, we will create a Riverside hub that serves a community by providing a first responder station."

Kabbara said other steps to support low-income students would include partnering with SureWalk and stores like H-E-B to make grocery shopping more accessible.

Throughout the debate, Kabbara and Jones said the experience they previously held in Student Government and in leadership positions in other student organizations make them well suited for the role as student body president and vice president.

WEST CAMPUS

Quarters residents displaced due to apartment renovations, say they were given little notice

By **Skye Seipp**
@seippetc

Some residents of The Quarters on Campus, which includes six West Campus properties, have been displaced with little notice during the past month due to renovations that require residents to move out.

Residents said it was difficult to find out about their new housing arrangements because of a lack of communication and responses from The Quarters. The Quarters offered to place residents in the Moxy Hotel or relocate them to another empty apartment, according to an email from The Quarters to residents, obtained by The Daily Texan. There was also an option to stay during renovations, although one email said due to renovations on certain days, “access in/out of your unit will be next to impossible.”

The renovations were supposed to take eight business days per unit, according to an email to The Quarters residents.

Jennifer Tran, a biochemistry and Asian American studies senior, said she was given a two-day notice before renovations started and was moved to another apartment within the complex. Tran’s lease states the complex can relocate any resident with a five-day notice. Tran also said she did not see construction



KIRSTEN HAHN / THE DAILY TEXAN STAFF

With little warning, residents at The Quarters on Campus apartments were forced to move out in February because of renovations to the buildings.

workers wearing masks inside the complex.

“I’ve lived here for three years, so I wasn’t surprised by the kind of treatment we received,” Tran said. “I was really angry and upset because I really genuinely felt kind of helpless.”

Mike Watson, a property manager for The Quarters, said the complex has been “openly communicating” with residents since renovations began in early 2020 by

emailing residents two weeks in advance and sending a follow-up a week later. Watson said the complex “fell short of that commitment” due to the recent winter storm.

“Upon realizing the issue, we addressed it and reached out immediately to the residents affected,” Watson said in an email.

Watson did not respond to a request for comment on how the issue was “addressed.”

Civil engineering senior

Evana Wang said she was given a 10-day notice before renovations began, but did not receive her hotel reservations until the day before moving out. Wang said she did not receive a rent reduction this month for having to relocate.

Wang was housed at the Moxy Hotel — which does not have fridges, microwaves or kitchens in the rooms — for 19 days because of the recent winter storm.

“When all the restaurants closed, we were kind

of left to fend for ourselves,” Wang said.

Wang said The Quarters did not tell her when she could return to her apartment until the day of. She said when she moved back in there was debris left in her apartment, furniture was rearranged and some of the renovations were not complete.

Finance junior Maryam Syed said she moved into the Moxy Hotel on Feb. 4 and is still living there as of Monday. Syed said their property manager told her and her roommates The Quarters would offer some compensation for meals. She said she has visited her apartment since renovations started and her desk was broken beyond repair.

Syed said she and her roommates discussed their frustrations with their property manager, who offered to renew their lease at a lower rate. She said when they applied, the room was taken by other tenants and there were no longer any four-bedroom apartments available. Now, Syed and her roommates will have to move when the lease expires.

“That just goes to show they really don’t care about their residents, and they just do whatever they have to get done and just say, ‘Screw you,’ in the process,” Syed said. “You would hope the apartment you’re staying at would ... not take advantage of you in that way ... but I don’t think that’s the case with Quarters.”

CAMPUS

‘We’re trying to worry about surviving’



EMILY REED / THE DAILY TEXAN STAFF

Some UT students said their professors were unaccommodating following winter storm Uri.

By Ikram Mohamed
@ikramxmoham

Snowed in at her parent’s home in Marble Falls, Texas, Laura Benac spent a week huddled over her phone, worried about her friends in Austin. Ten days later, she logged in to Canvas and took an anthropology test just two hours after campus reopened.

“It’s been exhausting trying to come back after this,” said Benac, a communication

and anthropology senior. “I shouldn’t give myself a hard time if I get a bad grade on this because I know my personal state of being wasn’t the best.”

From Feb. 14 to Feb. 24, winter storm Uri forced a campus closure and left millions of Texans without power and running water. UT President Jay Hartzell urged professors to put a pause on schoolwork, but some students felt their professors weren’t understanding of their situations.

While Benac’s anthropology test was originally scheduled for Feb. 15, her professor extended the exam window by 24 hours every time campus’ reopening was pushed back.

Benac’s professor, Anthropology professor Ward Keeler, said he kept adjusting his course schedules and eventually decided to push back every assignment’s due date by one week.

“Of course, everybody’s stress levels are higher because of the COVID pandemic

(and they) skyrocketed because of the ice storm,” Keeler said. “I’m sure it’s true I could have communicated the modifications (for the exam and class) better.”

The test ultimately took place Feb. 24, the day the University reopened. Benac said having to take a test immediately after returning from a crisis felt like a slap in the face.

“He never gave any alternate opportunities or addressed the fact that some people may still not have power or access to Canvas,” Benac said. “There was just an assumption that we would all be okay by (Feb. 24) in order to take the test.”

Keeler said students didn’t contact him about dealing with the continued impacts of the storm, and said he can’t respond to students who haven’t reached out to him.

Shagufta Shabbir, an organic chemistry assistant professor, said she communicates with students through

email and during office hours about their situations, but has only had two students express their difficult personal situations since campus has reopened.

“I got an email from a student saying their computer broke down from water damage (from the storm) and they were having trouble completing the assignment,” Shabbir said. “My response was the assignment would not be considered for them.”

Shabbir said she adjusted her coursework and canceled one of her five scheduled exams.

Nutrition junior Ashley, who requested anonymity to avoid negative academic consequences, said it was still frustrating to return and be met with assignments in Shabbir’s class, compared to her other professors who had assigned no work last week.

“Our power and water went out for a couple of days,” Ashley said. “(There) was a lot of anxiety. We’re trying

to worry about surviving. Why am I (having) to worry about school?”

Shabbir said she feels students’ concerns about her being unaccommodating are valid, as she always gives students the benefit of the doubt.

“Some people might be in a worse situation than others,” Shabbir said. “I know some students of mine who still don’t have water. I just hope that they don’t lose faith or motivation (during) this time.”

Ashley said she didn’t get her Wi-Fi back until Feb. 23, the day before classes resumed. Once it returned, she said it was challenging to finish assignments while simultaneously recovering from the events of the past week.

“We’re in the middle of a pandemic and we experienced a snowstorm,” Ashley said. “This week was a lot for students. I know it’s traumatized people. I think lightening up the workload might be helpful.”

STUDENT LIFE

Winter storm urges UT student to create volunteer program for community affected by lack of water

By Hanaa Irfan
@hanaabun

Kat Zhang, living in one of the few buildings around campus that still had running water during the winter storm, wanted to help her peers. She recruited a few friends and created a Google spreadsheet where students could offer water to those without.

Within 24 hours, Zhang's water volunteer program reached its 120 volunteer capacity.

As nearly half of the state's population was affected by water infrastructure problems and tens of thousands of Austin residents were left without running water, UT students scrambled to find reliable water sources around campus.

Released Feb. 19, two days after the citywide boil notice, the spreadsheet included volunteers who had experience driving in snow to deliver water, had functional bathrooms and were able to provide running water.

"We got a lot of traction which is really awesome because hopefully we got to help more people that way," said Zhang, a Chinese studies and public relations sophomore. "It just kind of started snowballing from there."

Most students in need were directed to a volunteer

student's apartment where they could pick up boiled water or fill up their own jugs.

Government freshman Joseph Kudler was in charge of social media outreach and said the two days leading up to the program's release were hectic. From Feb. 17-19, the team created a water accessibility survey, informational graphics and a volunteer spreadsheet.

"A lot of what I did was just posting on every social media platform I could to get the word out," Kudler said. "I sent it in every group chat I was in, every GroupMe I was in, put it on Twitter and Instagram."

Kudler, who is from White Plains, New York, said he had never experienced a state of crisis on par with what Texas went through. He said he used his experience dealing with winter storms to help students who were less equipped.

"Everything was iced over, so I took my hammer and I just broke away the ice on the hill in front of the PCL," Kudler said. "Everyone was slipping down (the hill) and so I created a walkway so people wouldn't slip and slide."

One of the volunteers, Divya Nagarajan, a public health and biochemistry sophomore, said complete strangers were coming in and out of her



ALEX DONOVAN / THE DAILY TEXAN STAFF

West Campus apartment after reaching out to her through the form for access to running water.

"I was a little more hesitant about that because we're pretty COVID conscious,"

Nagarajan said. "But I felt like it was pretty important, especially when I know (that) on campus, for a while, the bathrooms also stopped working."

Although the boil

water notice is no longer in effect, Zhang said she is still coordinating water distribution. Nagarajan said she will continue to provide water for students whose pipes have burst over the next

few days.

"It was just nice to be able to help out in whatever way we could, since we were so lucky that we did not really lose our power or water," Nagarajan said.

FEATURE

UT professors share their experiences during historic winter storm, how they dealt with harsh conditions

By Zoe Tzanis
@ztzanis

First, the power went out. Then the heat. Then the water. Wearing layers of clothes and huddled together with his wife, daughter and cat to stay warm, Michael Mosser saw his modern day conveniences whisked away in the blink of an eye.

“For a week, we got a chance to see what billions of people experience around the world,” Mosser said. “It was humbling.”

Mosser, an international relations and global studies and government assistant professor, said he and his neighbors faced an unsettling reality: below-freezing temperatures, power outages, water scarcity and uncertainty surrounding when those problems would be resolved.

On top of adjusting course schedules and accommodating students, professors like Mosser experienced a historic winter storm mid-February that left thousands without power or water for days. Two weeks later, many are still dealing with damage to their homes and resources.

Playing board games by candlelight and spending quality time with his family, Mosser said he tried to take his mind off of the calamity around him.

“Looking for the small moments of beauty in

this unfolding tragedy was something that I could use to take my mind off of the unpredictable aspect of it,” Mosser said.

Assistant communication professor Madeleine Redlick didn’t expect the storm to leave such a lasting impression on Austin, let alone her family. When her pipes burst the afternoon of Feb. 15, Redlick found herself in uncharted waters.

“

(UT) only closed itself day by day, so we could never really plan. We just had to keep flexing our plans.”

MADELEINE REDLICK
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR

“I have a Ph.D. My husband has a master’s degree,” Redlick said “We have tons of education between the two of us. None of that education prepares you (on) how to deal with a burst outdoor pipe.”

On her hands and knees in the snow, Redlick said she couldn’t figure out how to turn the water off and eventually had to call the fire department.

Spending three days without water, Redlick said it was stressful trying to adjust her



CHLOE PERTUIT / THE DAILY TEXAN STAFF

course schedule amid the uncertainty of the University’s reopening. She said she found out about the University’s plans with the rest of the UT community.

“The University only closed itself day by day, so we could never really plan,” Redlick said. “We just had to keep flexing our plans for how to be accommodating of what (students) were going through.”

Erica Ciszek, an advertising and public

relations assistant professor, said even though she and her wife both grew up in New England, they weren’t prepared for the impacts of the storm.

“We’re just thinking, ‘Oh it’s gonna snow. That will be fun for the kids,’” Ciszek said. “We weren’t aware of how unprepared the city and state infrastructure was.”

Ciszek and her family lost power for five days and water for four. She said they used melted snow to flush toilets,

kept warm by candlelight and took advantage of water distribution sites in southwest Austin.

As conditions worsened and power outages extended, Ciszek said she saw her neighborhood swell with community spirit.

“We really saw the force come together in our community Buy Nothing group, which is this community Facebook group where people swap resources,” Ciszek said.

“People were posting needs for water (and) firewood.”

Five days later, when the power and water finally returned, Ciszek said she and her wife rejoiced with celebratory posts on social media.

“It was this glorious moment,” Ciszek said. “Even though the water pressure was low and there was still a boil notice, it felt very celebratory. I didn’t have to collect snow to flush toilets anymore.”

FOOTBALL

'Sark Effect' in full swing

Texas has landed six recruits from the 2022 cycle in the first two months of Sarkisian's tenure.

By Riley Glenn
@rileyglenn13

Before head coach Steve Sarkisian was hired Jan. 2, the class of 2022 football recruiting cycle indicated the confidence surrounding the Texas football program was deteriorating among high school prospects.

The Longhorns had only one commitment in the class and Southlake Carroll quarterback Quinn Ewers, the No. 1-ranked player in the nation, had decommitted. Here is what Sarkisian has done on the recruiting trail in his first two months as head coach:

Retaining a commitment in the secondary:

Four-star cornerback Jaylon Guilbeau out of Port Arthur, Texas is the only player out of Texas' seven commits to have pledged to the Longhorns under former head coach Tom Herman. Upon accepting the head coaching position, Sarkisian honored Guilbeau's offer and retained his commitment.

Guilbeau has good size and length for the position at 6 feet tall and 175 pounds, and he earned First-Team All-District honors at Memorial High as both a sophomore and junior. He also runs the 400- and 800-meter dash in track.

Landing high-profile wide receivers:

Sarkisian picked up commitments from two four-star wide receivers. Frisco Liberty High product Evan Stewart is the smaller of the two at 6 feet tall and 175 pounds, but his tape shows eye-popping athleticism and straight-line speed. Stewart is also a track star, running a 10.74 100-meter sprint as well as competing in the long jump and triple jump. Armani Winfield, a 6-foot-2-inch 180-pound receiver from Lewisville, Texas, serves as a complement to Stewart's skillset. He is a bigger receiver who uses his frame to bully smaller cornerbacks and make contested catches with ease. These two both have the ability to be key contributors as soon as they step on the Forty Acres.

Finding a replacement for Ewers:

Sarkisian parlayed his clout in California from coaching in the Pac-12 Conference to landing five-star quarterback Maalik Murphy, a 6-foot-5-inch 225-pound pro-style prospect out of Junipero Serra High School in Gardena, California. Murphy



JOSHUA GUENTHER / THE DAILY TEXAN FILE

The Texas Longhorns football team gathers together before a game against LSU on Sept. 7, 2019. Since new head coach Steve Sarkisian took over in January, the Longhorns have received a commitment from six class of 2022 prospects.

lacks both the experience and production normally seen out of five-star prospects after his school didn't play in 2020 due to COVID-19 protocols, but his physical tools are that of an NFL quarterback. He has the size, athleticism and a strong arm that can throw the ball over 70 yards. Sarkisian has a great track record coaching quarterbacks, so if he is able to unlock Murphy's untapped potential, there is no ceiling for how good he could be.

Scoring another running back pledge:

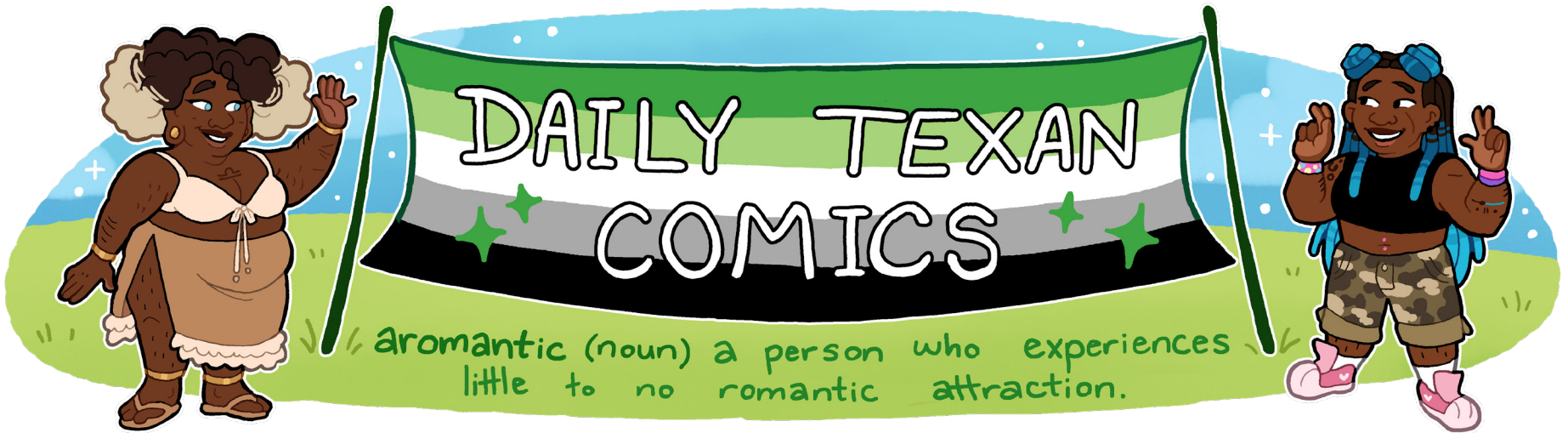
Texas has continued to add to

the offensive side of the ball with a commitment from four-star running back Jaydon Blue, a 6-foot, 205-pound running back from Klein Cain High School in Houston, Texas. Blue possesses a nice blend of speed and power, as well as a knack for breaking tackles and using his incredible balance to bounce off defenders. He enjoyed a prolific junior campaign, rushing for 2,155 yards and 30 touchdowns on 227 carries.

Beefing up the defensive side:

Trevell Johnson, a 6-foot-1-

inch three-star linebacker from Martin High School in Arlington, Texas, flew under the radar in recruiting circles. However, he gained attention from Power 5 schools with his strong junior season, accumulating 109 tackles and four sacks. The Longhorns most recent commit is four-star safety Bryan Allen Jr. from perennial powerhouse Aledo High School. Allen is athletically gifted and marks another UT commit with a track and field background, showing versatility in the secondary. He pairs his strong coverage skills with a willingness to tackle in the run-game.



GLORY OF FOOD



AZULE



Cloud Watching
by Megan Clarke

MEN'S BASKETBALL

Not so under the radar: Cunningham's hustle stands out

By Matthew Boncosky
@mboncosky

Redshirt sophomore forward Brock Cunningham does not show up on the stat sheet most nights, but his grit and toughness on the court is evident to anyone watching the game.

Cunningham is perhaps the best example of a player who knows his role on an experienced team with other players who receive far more attention than himself. The 6-foot-5-inch, smack-talking forward consistently puts his body on the line to grab rebounds or poke at any loose ball he can navigate to — important contributions that are often overlooked.

"I love the role that (head) coach (Shaka) Smart has set out for me, and it's something that I can do really well," Cunningham said. "The stuff behind the scenes is where I really thrive."

The local product from Westlake High School in Austin, Texas has become a fan favorite due to his infectious energy and enthusiasm for making a tough play whenever needed. His hustle on the court has made him popular with teammates as well.

"He's phenomenal," sophomore forward Kai Jones said. "He's like a cowboy out there. He's just wild. I love the way he plays."

The forward's style of play is often compared to the likes of seven-time NBA rebounding champion Dennis Rodman or Golden State forward Draymond Green, NBA players who became notorious for their efforts in chasing down rebounds and loose balls. Cunningham said he modeled his game after them growing up.

"Getting position and following the ball in the air is everything for me because I can't

jump up to 12 feet," Cunningham said. "I've got to go and pick (the ball) when it's on the ground or poke it out of people's hands."

However, things haven't always been rosy for Cunningham, who struggled to find playing time early in his Texas career. According to Smart, there was a time when Cunningham would get upset about his lack of playing time, but the relationship between coach and player has since come a long way.

"I really think we now have a

shared common understanding of wanting the same thing," Smart said. "I'm just so glad that he's part of our team, because he is really, really unique."

The redshirt sophomore said he learned a lot about himself throughout the process of settling into his role for Texas.

"I felt like I needed to work through freshman and sophomore year and not run away from the challenge," Cunningham said. "I'm unbelievably grateful that I did stand and work through

those tough times. ... It's given me a lot of confidence to do anything outside of basketball."

His work has paid off. Cunningham has seen more consistent playing time this season, averaging 16.9 minutes per game. His stat line rarely jumps off the page, but Cunningham says he prefers the behind-the-scenes grit anyway.

"It doesn't bother me," Cunningham said. "I'm happy with four loose balls, two fouls and maybe a charge here and

there. That's a great game in my eyes."

That extra effort in doing the dirty work for the Longhorns can often be the difference between victory and defeat. Smart stressed how important Cunningham is to the success of the Longhorns.

"I'm proud of Brock for hanging in there," Smart said. "As long as he plays in Texas moving forward — because of the trust that he's gained and the way that he's played — he's always going to have a pivotal role on this team."



JACK MYER / THE DAILY TEXAN FILE

Redshirt sophomore forward Brock Cunningham attempts to inbound the ball during a game against the University of California Baptist on Nov. 12, 2019. Cunningham has seen his playing time increase this season as his hustle for loose balls and rebounds intensifies.