



# ETERA

Dallas College Eastfield Campus

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restricts access  
to TikTok content  
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## DID A HUMAN MAKE THIS?

Advances in AI have artists worried for their future

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# TikTok banned from college networks

By **CARMEN GUZMAN**  
Managing Editor  
@TheEtCetera

TikTok is now banned on all Dallas College campus networks following an order by Gov. Greg Abbott.

A college-wide employee email on Feb. 13 announced the ban, instructing all employees to uninstall TikTok on any college-issued devices and cease posting on official TikTok accounts. The college is developing a network restriction to enforce the ban.

Abbott unveiled a statewide plan on Feb. 6 to ban TikTok on the networks of state agencies and higher education institutions. He cited national security concerns due to data harvesting and surveillance by the Chinese government.

"It is critical that state agencies and employees are protected from the vulnerabilities presented by the use of this app and other prohibited technologies as they work on behalf of their fellow Texans," Abbott said.

A ban was first ordered on state-issued devices in December, but the governor has since moved to codify "necessary cybersecurity reforms" during the ongoing legislative session.

Before Feb. 13, Dallas College didn't express interest in a TikTok ban but was "actively mon-

itoring communications from the governor's office," according to Chief Risk Officer David Williams.

That position has changed, and the college is following other higher-education institutions such as Texas A&M and the University of North Texas, which issued bans of their own even before the Feb. 6 statement.

Some Dallas College students say they are displeased by the idea of a network ban.

"It makes me feel like we don't have any sense of freedom," psychology major Nicole Cruz said. "TikTok gives us the right to express our creativity."

Cruz posts TikTok videos about her favorite songs and gives music recommendations. She uses the app over other social media platforms because of its immersive content and relaxed copyright policy.

"I feel like with any social media, we're going to be watched at any point, any time," Cruz said.

TikTok bans have sprouted up in 27 states. A ban on federal-issued devices was rolled out in December, citing the same concerns as Abbott's.

The app's privacy policy states that it collects information such as IP addresses, keystrokes and location data among other information.

However, where other apps may collect user data for targeted advertising, TikTok, and more specifically its parent company ByteDance, is subject to Chinese national security data audits.

"Unlike other platforms like Facebook, TikTok is owned by a Chinese company and therefore is not subject to the same U.S. privacy laws used to safeguard user information," Williams said.

The app's content-generation mechanism is often a point of concern. TikTok excels at providing an infinite stream of bite-sized content, curated to keep the user engaged without limits. Cruz estimates her TikTok usage to be around two hours a day. She often finds herself using the app in class, even if it's a brief glance at her feed.

"I feel like the government is trying to control, control, control," business major Isabelle McMennamy said. "There's more important things to focus on."

Both McMennamy and Cruz stick to comedic and musical content, seeing no reason to be concerned over an outside entity possibly logging what content they view.

Students have expressed awareness over their digital footprint, but don't see the harm in viewing content such as memes, especially on

apps like TikTok.

"Student organizations and individual students are encouraged to weigh the privacy risks of engaging with TikTok," Williams said.

Business major Diego Rodriguez doesn't use TikTok as much as his friends do, only to post occasional videos of him playing the guitar.

Unlike the rest of his circle, Rodriguez, concerned with the app's addictive qualities, is in favor of a statewide ban.

"I know somebody who gets sad just by watching TikTok and it affects their day," Rodriguez said.

But some students say they could disconnect from Dallas College's network or using a VPN to circumvent a network ban.

"I got service," Cruz said.

"I got unlimited [data]," McMennamy added.

Support for TikTok bans remain strong with both sides of the political spectrum, despite existing concerns over the legal precedent such a ban may set. While the TikTok ban doesn't faze students who are aware of a workaround for using the app, students like McMennamy have expressed concern over government overreach.

"Our generation pretty much grew up with unrestricted access to the internet," McMennamy said.

# Honors program aiming to expand outreach

By **CARMEN GUZMAN**  
Managing Editor  
@TheEtCetera

Dallas College's honors program has created the Honors Student Organization to increase the program's visibility.

The honors program has added new advisers to assist with the program. By building a community, the program aims to attract more students and offer even more honors courses, said Erika Machuca, honors program senior manager.

"Right now, we've been very digital, and that only gets you so far," Machuca said. "We really need to get in front of students."

Eastfield's honors classes have been online since the consolidation due to a lack of enrollment in face-to-face classes, Machuca said.

"We need students to come in and bring us the opportunity to bring in-person honors classes back," said Manuel Serrato, a political science major.

Serrato took the reins of the HSO's leadership after Machuca asked for his help to attract more students into the honors program. Their goal is to



RORY MOORE/THE ET CETERA

**Academic program coordinator Hedy Watkins talks to students about the honors program during the club fair on Feb. 8.**

have recruitment events and meetings before the semester ends.

"I'm in my last year. I want to do as much as possible," Serrato said.

Serrato wants to achieve a boom in the honors program like those observed in other programs.

"Everyone knows what Student Life is because they are very, very visible. ... Our scope is different," Machuca said.

Serrato and academic program co-

ordinator Hedy Watkins were in attendance for both the welcome bash on Jan. 26 and the club fair on Feb. 8. The latter event saw 15 students apply to the program. Students need a 3.3 GPA and nine credit hours to qualify for the honors program. Applications are accepted year-round at DallasCollege.edu/Honors.

Some students fear being saddled with more coursework, which may prevent them from joining the pro-

gram, English instructor Elizabeth Huston said.

According to Dallas College's website, honors classes are smaller in size, and coursework focuses on research and independent inquiries.

"We help them learn how to open themselves to thinking in different ways," Huston said. "The main focus is helping them expand, not make it harder."

Each campus used to have its own honors program and selection of honors classes. However, after the consolidation, all the programs were disbanded to make a general honors program for Dallas College – with no central location.

"Our offices are all over the place," Serrato said.

Honors classes also have been scattered throughout campuses, requiring honors students to drive throughout Dallas to get to their classes.

Huston described having honors students who find their experience worsened by going digital. As the HSO's co-adviser, Huston wants to bring honors students back into the classrooms.

Huston said some honors students

have not enjoyed the online class environment due to the lack of discussion and focus compared to an in-person setting.

"There tends to be a camaraderie that develops with all our students, especially in a face-to-face environment," Huston said.

The last time Huston taught an honors class was before the pandemic, and the class she's currently teaching had to go online.

Her experience hasn't been as fulfilling due to having limited interaction with her students.

Students like Serrato felt encouraged to take leadership roles in the HSO after interactions with student organizations that don't struggle to recruit.

Serrato is already a member of Phi Theta Kappa and Eastfield's League of United Latin American Citizens, doing what he can to help those programs gain members. But his ambitions have grown in the HSO, and one of his biggest goals is to help bring students into the organization and help it thrive in the future.

"I'm going to come back sometime, and I hope to see things are running smooth," Serrato said.

# Life steers commander from farm to force

By **MOIRA MCINTEE**  
Editor in Chief  
@TheEtCetera

A new commander is patrolling the Eastfield campus, but there's more to Kelly Hooten than policing. A ranch-style home life and love for all things nature make up a big part of his life off campus.

Hooten transferred to Eastfield after five years of service as commander at the Mountain View campus. Before that he spent 23 years with the Lancaster Police Department.

"I actually went to college at Tarleton State University. I finished there, got my degree, and when I got out I started putting out resumes," he said.

"The degree that I got is in industrial technology. But, at that time when I graduated, they were laying people off. It was the perfect storm for not getting a job."

After a few years of working odd jobs, Hooten got hired with the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department.

"I worked in the jail. And while I was working there, I put myself through the police academy," he said.

Hooten always had an interest in law enforcement but chose to follow a different path when he entered college. Looking back, he can see it wasn't the right choice, but things still worked out.

"You might say God had a purpose for me," he said. "I was trying to do what I thought might be best by going the other direction, but I wound up going back to it anyway."

Hooten's interests don't begin and end with the law. Ten acres of land, 43 chickens and a 31-year-old horse named Domino keep him busy when he's not in uniform.

"[Domino] is actually a Tennessee Walker," Hooten said. "She was a three-way blended horse: Tennessee Walker, Paint and Pinto. She's what they call a Tobiano."

Hooten worked for a farmer for a short period after graduating college, gaining experience taking care of the land and animals.

"I never had farm animals growing up, but I always had an interest in them," he said. "I've been around people who farmed, but I didn't get my own animals until I got a house of my own."

The farm started off as a small project, but it quickly grew into something bigger than he expected. Just a few chicks eventually turned into a large brood.



PHOTOS BY RORY MOORE/THE ET CETERA

**Commander Kelly Hooten, right, speaks with student engagement coordinator James Lehman during a club fair on Feb 8.**

"Actually, it was my wife who was really interested in getting the chickens," he said. "But right now, with how high-priced eggs are, it's very nice to have them."

Traveling with his wife has always been one of Hooten's favorite activities despite a recent lapse in travel plans.

"Several years ago, we went to the Smokies and drove up Blue Ridge Parkway," he said. "That's a beautiful drive, especially if you hit the right time of the year for the color change."

Hooten always appreciated the tree line at Mountain View and would take photos when the leaves changed to their bold autumn colors while he was on patrol.

Even with five years of experience as commander at another campus, adjusting to a new work environment still takes time.

"He's only been here a short minute, so he's still trying to get his feet wet," Cpl. Vicki Ethington said. "But he's slid in pretty good and we're all helping him."

A friendly attitude toward not only his coworkers, but the student body and staff as well, allows him to make connections easily.

"He's very approachable and he loves to talk," Ethington said. "He's very knowledgeable with police stuff

but just in general too. He's super easy to talk to, so he encourages us to talk to him about anything."

Hooten did not hesitate to jump straight into his new position, catching the attention of administration.

"He showed up for the campus leadership team meeting his first day, after being on the campus less than an hour," Eastfield President Eddie Tealer said. "So I feel he will continue to be engaged with our campus community."

Hooten sees his role on campus as a safety net for students. Taking his time gives him the ability to handle situations without needing to escalate in most cases.

"It's all about people, and how we can help them, how we can serve them," Hooten said. "It's about what I can do for other people. How can I help them? Sometimes it's by removing a threat or whatever. But sometimes it's just by letting them talk."

Ethington said campus officers are happy to chat and want students to come say hi.

"Most of us are approachable, even if our face doesn't show it," she said. "Cops have a tendency to get this look about them, but it's just from working so many years in the in the business. But you can come talk to us and we'll laugh with you and



**Kelly Hooten became the commander of campus police at Eastfield after previously working at Mountain View.**

cut up, just as long as the situation is appropriate for that."

Police involvement with the campus includes more than just patrolling for illegal or dangerous activity.

"Please visit with our officers and participate in some of their events here on campus," Tealer said. "For example, they have booths set up in the Hive and promote and support a lot of campus events."

Hooten said he wants the student body to feel safe around campus po-

lice, not intimidated. Transparency and a willingness to listen is how he tries to break down barriers.

"In my experience [law enforcement] can be our own worst enemy," he said. "Because it's all about people. It's how you treat people. And over the last few years, we've caught a lot of negativity. And if you want to eliminate as much of that as possible, you have to get into how you treat people and how you conduct yourself and do your job."

## NEWS Briefs

### Death at Mountain View shakes campus

A dual credit B-Tech/Molina High School student was found dead at the Mountain View campus on Feb. 7. Officers found a male victim with a “self-inflicted gunshot wound,” according to police. This is an ongoing investigation by the Dallas Police Department.

Dallas College is offering a variety of services to the community for professional support during this time, according to an email from Beatriz Joseph, Mountain View interim president.

“This is a difficult time for the Mountain View campus community, and I extend my deepest sympathies to the student’s family, friends, instructors and classmates,” the email read. “Our thoughts are with all those who are grieving this loss.”

To connect with a counselor, call 972-669-6400, email [counseling@dallascollege.edu](mailto:counseling@dallascollege.edu) or schedule an appointment through the Navigate app.

### Submissions open for student literary competition

Students can win \$100 in this year’s student literary competition. Contestants must present an original written work by the March 31 deadline. Winners will be announced April 15. There are no limits to the number of entries and genres in which contestants can enter.

First place will advance to a state competition. Second and third places will receive honorable mentions. All winning entries will be published in “The Eclectic,” a student literary journal. Contest enrollment and entries can be submitted to [rramos@dallascollege.edu](mailto:rramos@dallascollege.edu).

### Community college funding added to budget proposals

A \$650 million community college-funding proposal was approved by the Texas House of Representatives and Senate during the 88th Texas Legislative session to support success-based funding.

The package was proposed by the Texas Commission of Community College Finance on Oct. 18, 2022, and the proposal moved through both chambers with few changes.

From this funding, \$428 million will be used for student success formulas, \$139 million for the Texas Educational Opportunity program, \$33 million to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to “improve institutional innovations and collaborations,” and the remaining \$50 million will go to tuition assistance.



WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Isabel Wilkerson, author of the *Common Book*, will speak with readers during a virtual meet and greet at Brookhaven on March 1.

# Common Book disturbs, inspires

By **MOIRA MCINTEE**  
Editor in Chief  
@TheEtCetera

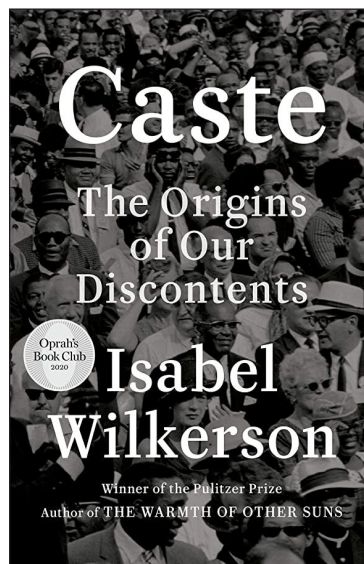
The entirety of American history cannot fit into the typical textbook. There are many more perspectives about the past than are typically taught in school.

“Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents” by Isabel Wilkerson is a non fiction book designed to examine all sides of history.

This book “explores, through layered analysis and stories of real people, the structure of an unspoken system of human ranking and reveals how our lives are still restricted by what divided us centuries ago,” according to the author’s website.

The Pulitzer-winning book was chosen as this year’s Common Book for Dallas College.

“Common Book is a program where Dallas College chooses a particular book and runs events throughout either a year or two years,” Eastfield librarian Mary Myers said. “Everyone is encouraged to read this particular title and there will be events. The instructors are encouraged to include information from the book or something about the book in their lesson plans if possible.”



The Common Book committee gives students and faculty access to a book that stretches across multiple academic disciplines.

“When students are studying one thing in one class and then they get to use it in another class, I think that does two things,” English faculty Timothy Cedor said. “Number one, they see that there’s value in what they’re learning because it really does apply to other aspects of their life. And number two, it reinforces that learning. Instead of hearing it once, they’ve heard it twice. ... So

now they deeply know it instead of only kind of knowing it.”

“Caste” was not an easy selection to make, Cedor said.

“It is a very emotionally intense book. And I didn’t know if faculty were ready to teach it or if the students were ready to read it,” he said. “It was not my first choice. It is a fantastic book. But it did have a lot of problems that I thought we needed to at least try to address before we picked it.”

The book touches on many topics, such as racism, dehumanization and torture. The intensity forced Cedor to take breaks while reading to recover.

However, the extremity of the topics the book covers did not dissuade everyone.

English major Grace Ortega was intrigued by the book for those very reasons.

“I heard about it from my English professor, and I was immediately interested,” Ortega said. “I think this kind of stuff, these stories and topics, are so important to know about. More people should push themselves to learn about the things that might make them uncomfortable.”

The selection process for the Common Book happens every two years. Anyone can suggest a book,

including students.

The committee then sifts through the books and assigns each member a few to read.

Despite not being the first pick for some committee members, it was ultimately decided that the greater meaning made the book the best choice.

While it may be hard to read for some, its purpose is important, Cedor said.

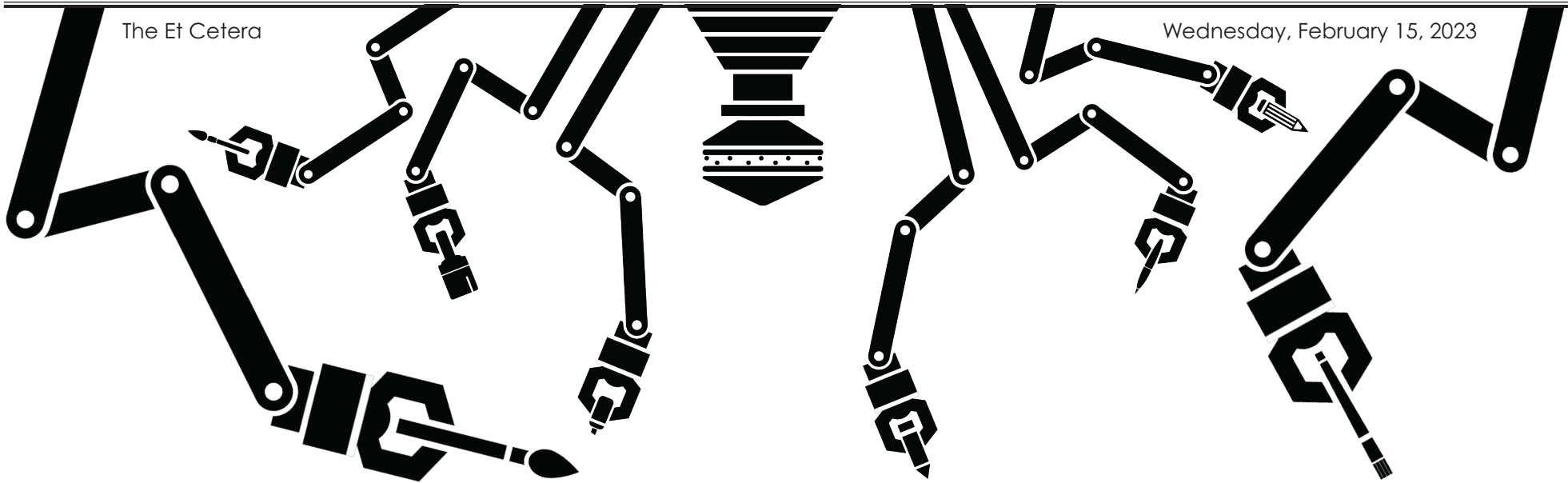
“It allows the students to talk about what’s really going on in their daily lives. The very first semester we started using this book, it was right around the time George Floyd died. And that really allowed students to talk about their experiences,” Cedor said. “It also teaches students a history that they didn’t learn in school.”

Relating “Caste” to current issues helped some understand the book on a deeper level.

“I haven’t finished the book yet, but I keep having eye-opening moments where I can totally see how this all still affects our current political and social climate,” Ortega said. “I think sometimes people hear about things like racism and Jim Crow and push it aside like it doesn’t matter anymore, but that’s not true. These issues are still real, even if they look a little different now.”

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## Faculty, alumni address rise of AI art

By **MATTHEAU FAUGHT**  
Presentation Editor  
@TheEtCetera

Artificial intelligence image generators are the latest trend sweeping social media, with the ability to generate stunning artwork in seconds from a simple text prompt.

While creating art using AI is nothing new, the increased technological sophistication and accessibility to the public has had staggering results, and many artists are worried about their future.

“AI is doing much more whimsical stuff than I could do or have the time to do,” said Walter Land, a digital media professor at Dallas College. “Why would somebody pay me to do an illustration of them when they can get an app, pay for it for one month and create their own images?”

This isn’t the first time creatives have been threatened by newer technology. Land, a graphic designer by trade, related the new AI art trend to the shift from traditional to digital in graphic design.

“When I graduated college, I came out right at the cusp of it changing. Through four and a half years of college I’d never touched the computer,” Land said, “My very first job in the industry was on a computer.”

The advent of digital tools made the traditional skills he’d learned in his educational years mostly obsolete.

Now he feels artists today could be put in a similar situation.

Art generators like Midjourney can create fully rendered artwork within seconds, making many artists question whether the process will still matter when it comes to an employer’s bottom line.

“It’s very tough as an artist, as a creator, as an illustrator, as a designer, to ask someone to wait a week or two or more for their product

when they can type something into an AI generator and get it in seconds,” said Jeremy Biggers, an award-winning artist and Eastfield College graduate.

Although the technology currently has a few drawbacks, many commercial artists have wondered if AI art is going to be the new normal for designers and artists doing professional work.

“If you can get something for free and instantaneously versus paying someone upwards of hundreds or thousands of dollars, and then having to wait for a few weeks, everyone’s going to pick the free and quick version,” Biggers said.

Land said automation in his field has also made things easier for clients.

“Just being done by hand doesn’t mean much when you’re looking at how fantastical the image is,” Land said, “I see it in terms of the end user being able to get better imagery or stuff like that at a lesser price... I studied in an era where posters were the meat and bread of design studios. Who uses posters and that stuff now?”

AI image generators produce art using thousands of images across the web in their training sets.

The images used in these training sets are then processed to generate a new image in seconds.

This has raised concerns among artists who’ve witnessed outputs that look eerily similar to their own work.

“It’s hard for me to understand where the ownership lies,” Biggers said. “I think there’s a super gray area in terms of ethically if that’s OK to be pulling from artists who didn’t consent to their work being used as part of the learning model.”

Biggers compared this to how human artists draw inspiration from other works to create their own.

“I think that’s all the AI learning models are doing is pulling from those different artistic sources, so I think in that way it’s getting the same thing without as much of the heartache of experimenting and creating a style,” Biggers said.

Thousands of unsolicited images being processed in these training sets calls into question the ethics of AI art.

Because of this lack of legal clarity, many companies are wary about using AI technology.

Recently a trio of artists filed a lawsuit against Midjourney, Deviantart and Stability AI, proprietors of popular AI text-to-image generators.

The artists cited unfair competition laws and copyright violations, claiming their work and that of many others had been appropriated without permission.

Similarly, Getty Images is suing Stability AI, the creators behind Stable Diffusion, because the image generator has processed numerous images protected by licensing fees. CEO Craig Peters said in a news release that Getty hoped to set a legal precedent for negotiating use of images from its platform, citing past lawsuits against Napster and Spotify.

“We’re gonna have big conversations about authorship... aura and originality,” said Erica Stephens, a fine arts faculty member at Eastfield.

In December 2022, Stability AI announced it would allow artists, whose work had been used to train the AI, to opt out of their newer version.

This move was unpopular with many artists on social media who argued they were never given the choice to opt in to begin with.

“The responsibility is always given to the people that it shouldn’t be given to in terms of making sure we protect ourselves, and the protections are usually offered to the people

that took the work before it’s offered to the people that created the work in every facet,” Biggers said.

Land compared the controversy to legal disputes in the music industry.

“I think if they’re able to prove that their work was used, there needs to be some type of payoff. Like the music industry, you pay for sampling,” Land said. “It’s established now. If it’s proven you’ve sampled someone’s work, they have to be paid for it.”

Once the lawsuits are settled and the legal boundaries of AI art are established, the benefits of AI technology in the broader art and design community may be called into question.

There’s a possibility AI art could be integrated into a trained artist’s process once it becomes more advanced.

“If you’re a person that needs to pull from references or you would like to see something before putting in necessarily the hours it would take to come up with a mock-up or a sketch, it can be a tremendous tool,” Biggers said. “It’s still not quite there. At least the ones I’ve used aren’t quite ready for that level of detail, but I think it’s only a matter of time before that stuff comes.”

Artists using AI have faced much backlash on social media as well and are often denigrated as not being true artists.

“I think we’re doing them a disservice because the art and the craft may be in the language that they are composing to create the work,” Stephens said. “I think this is going to end up being its own field and its own genre.”

Amanada Araujo, a former Eastfield student and professional graphic designer, also expressed concern about how AI artists are treated.

“I don’t think they’re bad people. I think

# Success coach overcomes scarred childhood

By **LONDY RAMIREZ**  
Contributor  
@TheEtCetera

Alfonso Garcia was 6 years old when he and his mother crossed the U.S.-Mexico border fleeing his abusive alcoholic father.

He says the sound of bullets fired by U.S. Border Patrol agents and his mother's screams are forever engrained in his memories.

The special populations success coach uses his experience to guide students of varied backgrounds: veterans, athletes, international, undocumented and those who are part of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program.

"I like to go in depth with what else I can offer them as far as services that we have here," he said. "I want to do my best."

## Taking the time

The journey to get where he is now wasn't easy.

After crossing the border, Garcia and his mother walked to Chicago expecting to meet their relatives.

But no one was there.

They didn't know the language and weren't in the country legally. Going back to Mexico was not an option.

"I remember we just lived under the bridge by Lawrence and Lake Shore Drive," Garcia said. "We just stayed there. We also lived in abandoned buildings and parks."

They endured hunger, cold and sickness for a year. Then one cold, early morning in February, Garcia's mother started coughing up blood.

They went to John H. Stroger, Jr. Hospital in Cook County, which helps immigrants and low-income people.

After nine hours, Garcia was told his mother only had six months to live.

"It was hard," Garcia said. "And I didn't know what to do."

Remembering these moments isn't easy for Garcia.

It wasn't possible until he started going to therapy many years later.

His voice broke and his eyes welled with tears as he spoke. Occasionally, he had to wipe the tears with his scarf. But he says he is happy that he can tell his story now.

Three months after the hospital visit, the only person Garcia loved died in his arms.

The last time Garcia saw his mother was when her body was cremated. He left with her ashes in a small box.

## Losing his mother

For 15 years, Garcia remained homeless. Then, at 22, he decided something had to change.

He enrolled in college. Every day from 8 a.m. to 11 p.m. he went to Harry S. Truman College.

Garcia learned to speak English and later transferred to the University of Illinois Chica-



RORY MOORE/THE ET CETERA

**Alfonso Garcia uses his experiences with homelessness and immigration to help guide marginalized students.**

go, where he got his master's in Latino policies.

Afterward he spent 25 years in the education field with public and private schools and community colleges in Chicago.

Garcia never lost the pride of being Latino in a foreign country; whenever he has the time to speak Spanish he does it fluently and proudly.

Garcia has worked at Eastfield two years and is also adviser for the campus chapter of League of United Latin American Citizens.

LULAC is the largest and oldest Hispanic organization in the United States.

As the adviser, Garcia oversees the organization and assists the president. Cecilia Cruz, sonography major and LULAC president, met Garcia when he greeted her as she read in her favorite reading nook. One day he gave her his business card, and Cruz decided to visit him because she'd never been to a success coach before.

"When I first went in, it was for career advice," Cruz said. "I was an associate of arts [major] because it's a broad one."

But Garcia knew that Cruz wanted to do more.

"He's like, 'you don't really like to do that. Right?' And I was like, 'I just don't know what I want to do.' But he took the time," Cruz said.

She had walked into his office without notice and was afraid she was taking time away from other students, but he reassured her.

"I was like, 'I'm sorry. I know it was last minute. You could go ahead and take somebody else' and he's like 'no. I have time for you it's fine,'" she said.

During their conversation, she mentioned a career in the medical field. Garcia made her an appointment with a pathway specialist for the next day, which led Cruz's sonography major.

## 'You can do it'

Cruz says Garcia is confident, motivational and someone she can confide in. She used to work with him in the C building, and said she saw how he helped others the way he helped her.

"When he gets international students, he just makes them feel comfortable," Cruz said. "He shows them the same things he showed me. He showed everybody else the food pantry, counseling services, or if they needed life advice."

Success coach Jaime Martinez says he will never forget Garcia.

"He was one of the first people that I will never forget because he made me feel very welcome," he said. "He was very outgoing and just made me feel part of the team very quickly."

Anytime Martinez has a question or needs help, Garcia is there.

"I can always go in and ask for him because he just has that type of personality where he can connect with students," Martinez said.

Garcia says remembering his mother gives him strength, and he uses that strength to help other immigrant students succeed.

"It's possible," he said. "No one wanted to give a penny to me, but I'm an example that you can do it."

# HIGH



By **ALEXJA MUNOZ**

Contributor  
@TheEtCetera

The 2000s were an iconic time for rom-coms, which feature passionate love stories and humorous characters. These movies provide a sense of nostalgia and light-heartedness that many crave.

Since February is the month to celebrate love and romance, there is no better way to get in the mood than by watching movies that do the same. Here are some of my favorite rom-coms that are great to watch alone, with friends or someone special.

Illustrations by **MATTHEAU FAUGHT**

## 2000s rom-coms that celebrate love

### 1 *He's Just Not That Into You*

Released in: 2009

**Memorable quote:** "So trust me when I say if a guy is treating you like he doesn't give a s--t, he genuinely doesn't give a s--t. No exceptions." — Alex

**Where to watch:** Hulu and Amazon Prime Video (\$3.99)

"He's Just Not That Into You" is a movie in which we follow several people's love lives that intertwine in more ways than one.

The movie features Jennifer Aniston, Scarlet Johansson, Bradley Cooper and Ben Affleck, who make up an incredible cast. Together they produce a hilarious and relatable film that shows ordinary people struggling to find love and maintain relationships.

"He's Just Not That Into You" highlights the different problems people face in relationships and instills the idea that nothing good comes easy. It also stresses the importance of finding peace and love within yourself.

### 2 *She's the Man*

Released in: 2006

**Memorable quote:** "This isn't how I wanted it to happen, and I didn't want to hurt you, but I just wanted to prove that I was good enough." — Viola Hastings

**Where to watch:** YouTube (\$2.99) and Amazon Prime Video (\$2.99)

In "She's the Man" we are introduced to soccer-loving Viola Hastings, played by Amanda Bynes. After the girl's soccer team gets cut, she disguises herself as her twin brother and takes his place on the boy's soccer team. But trouble arises when she falls for her brother's roommate Duke, played by Channing Tatum, who is already in love with someone else.

Besides providing us with a complicated yet intriguing love triangle, this 2006 rom-com addresses gender inequality and helps us understand discrimination is harmful. Viola is determined to prove that a woman can do anything a man can do.

### 5 *How to Lose a Guy in 10 Days*

Released in: 2006

**Memorable quote:** "You can't lose something you never had." — Andie Anderson

**Where to watch:** Netflix and Paramount Plus

The plot centers around Andie Anderson, an advice columnist who is asked to write an article about what not to do in a new relationship.

She thinks any man would run from

### 3 *What Happens in Vegas*

Released in: 2008

**Memorable quote:** "It might come as a surprise to many of you that we didn't know each other for very long before we got hitched. What can I say? When you know, you know." — Jack Fuller

**Where to watch:** Hulu and HBO Max  
"What Happens in Vegas" tells the story of two strangers, Joy McNally and Jack Fuller, who meet in Las Vegas and get married after a drunken, crazy night. They agree to divorce, but when Jack wins \$3 million, things get complicated.

If they want to keep the money, they must learn to live together and learn the joys of marriage.

This movie takes the cake for the funniest plot and wittiest characters. Cameron Diaz and Ashton Kutcher do a great job convincing us that their connection is real while providing us with great comedic relief.

### 4 *The Proposal*

Released in: 2009

**Memorable quote:** "Now, you could imagine my disappointment when it suddenly dawned on me that the woman I love is about to be kicked out of the country." — Andrew Paxton

**Where to watch:** Hulu and Amazon Prime Video (\$3.99)

The movie follows an editor-in-chief for a New York publishing company, Margaret Tate, who faces deportation. In fear of having to leave the country and abandon her position, she blackmails her assistant, Andrew Paxton, into marrying her. Tension grows when they must convince her deportation officer, Paxton's family and themselves that they are in love.

"The Proposal," starring Sandra Bullock and Ryan Reynolds, was awarded the People's Choice Award for Favorite Comedic Movie a year after its release. It is a good match for those who want a good laugh and appreciate the fake relationship trope.

needy and overly emotional behavior until she meets Ben Barry, who has taken on a bet to make her fall in love with him in 10 days.

"How to Lose a Guy in 10 Days" features Kate Hudson and Matthew McConaughey, who teach us that time doesn't measure love.

This is the perfect movie for those looking to embrace the idea that you'll find love where you least expect it.

Wednesday, February 15, 2023





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The Et Cetera

# Lassiter's impact lives on

## Former chancellor helped guide Lonon's path

By **MOIRA MCINTEE**  
Editor in Chief  
@TheEtCetera

In 2006, Dallas College needed help. Damaged relationships within the college required a chancellor who could nurture it back to health. Wright Lassiter Jr. was swiftly appointed and served as chancellor for the next seven years.

"He really came in as a person to help rebuild the culture of the district," said Ann Hatch, former district director of media relations. "We really kind of viewed him as a peacemaker. Someone who wanted to respect the history of the district, the role that employees

play and the importance of students."

He made an impact on the college, community and individuals, that many still appreciate to this day.

"He left an amazing legacy on El Centro, on Dallas College as a whole and the countless thousands of students and employees that he supported," current Chancellor Justin Lonon said. "And certainly having the Lassiter Early College High School live on at El Centro, I think is a real testament to him."

Lassiter led the expansion of Dallas College during his tenure. A \$450 million bond package for the college was passed in 2004, and he oversaw its completion. The program was responsible for the addition of 29 new buildings throughout the district, which helped accommodate exceptional growth in enrollment with 80,000 credit students.

Before taking his position as chancellor, Lassiter served as president of El Centro for 20 years. He was asked to step in as interim chancellor when Jesus Carreon resigned abruptly at a board of trustees meeting. Then it was decided that Lassiter should hold the role permanently.

Because of his history with the district, people already knew who he was and what he stood for. According to Hatch, an open door was prioritized in his leadership.

"He was an excellent communicator," Hatch said. "As someone in news and media relations, you value a CEO who understands the role of communication, the importance of public relations and the importance of responding to the news media. He did all of those things. He was always accessible."

Lassiter helped those around him professionally and personally.

"I remember one time, because I respected his writing abilities, that I wanted to talk to him about what it took to write a book," Hatch said. "I'd always wanted to write one but just really never had the time. But he took the time to sit down with me, talking with me about it and giving me some advice. And I really appreciated the fact that it wasn't chancellor to employee. It was writer to writer."

Lassiter had a reputation for pushing his employees to do more than they thought themselves capable. Lonon experienced this personally.

"I give him a lot of credit for my personal career development and growth, certainly within higher education," Lonon said. "He gave me responsibilities for different functional areas at the time that I didn't necessarily have a background in, but he thought that I had the abilities to take on."

Lonon credits Lassiter for encouraging him to return to school to earn his doctorate and to eventually be chancellor himself.

Lassiter's relationships with his employees didn't stop at career advice and encouragement. He took the time to know the people he worked with on a more personal level, and to nurture those interpersonal dynamics.

As a big fan of Auburn University football, Hatch regularly collected memorabilia and cheered the team on. When Lassiter learned this about her, he never forgot it.

"He served on the advisory board of Auburn's College of Education," she said. "And when he went to Auburn, they would give him things like a calendar or a notebook or other things to use. And when he came back, he would always make sure that they found their way to my desk, which I really loved."

Auburn went on to win the national football championship one year while Lassiter was chancellor and he even made sure Hatch got his copy of Sports Illustrated that featured the win.

His involvement within the college was significant, but Lassiter was also very present in his surrounding community.

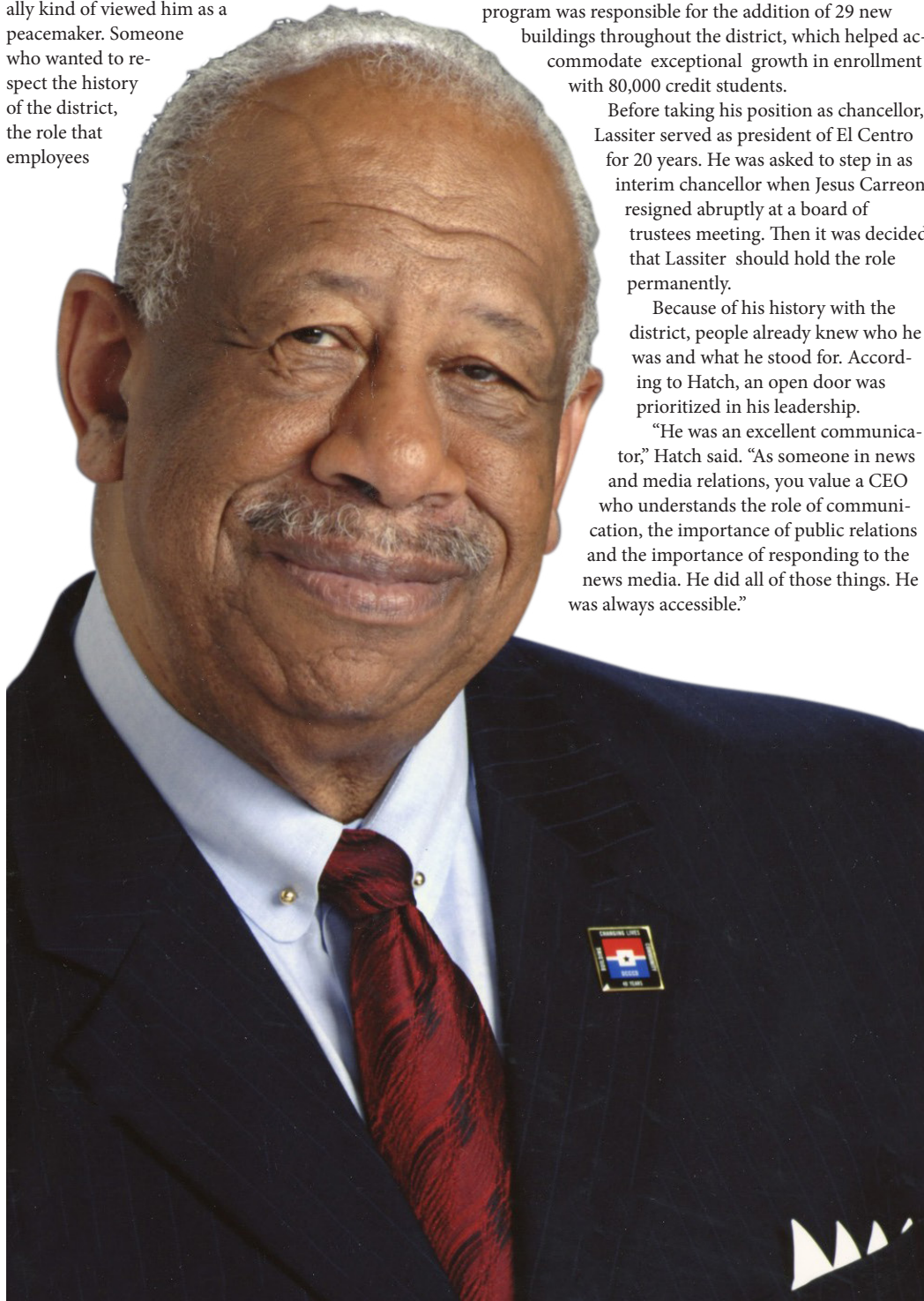
He served for six years as a member of the board of the Texas Council on the Humanities, 15 years as chairman of the board of trustees of the Dallas African American Museum and nine years as chairman of the board of the Urban League of Greater Dallas and North Central Texas.

During his 30 years working in higher education, Lassiter was appointed to national advisory positions by two U.S. presidents.

He served as a member of the White House Commission on Minority Business Development by President George H.W. Bush as well as the National Advisory Council to the National Endowment for the Humanities by President George W. Bush.

Lassiter died in 2019, five years after his retirement from Dallas College. During his time as chancellor, he became a confidant for many employees and community members, said Lonon.

"In addition to his lifelong legacy of servant leadership, Dr. Lassiter lives on through the work and service of those for whom he served as mentor," Eastfield history faculty member Matt Hinckley said.



## BLACK HISTORY MONTH

### ◆ EVENT CALENDAR ◆

**FEB 15** BLACK FILM FESTIVAL SCREENING  
EASTFIELD CAMPUS ROOM C-237  
10AM-2PM

**FEB 15** HBCU (HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES) TRANSFER FAIR  
EASTFIELD CAMPUS THE HIVE  
10AM-2PM

**FEB 15** HBCU PANEL DISCUSSION  
EASTFIELD CAMPUS ROOM C-214  
NOON-1PM

**FEB 16** BLACK EXCELLENCE BRUNCH  
EL CENTRO WEST ROOM S-H117  
11AM-1PM

**FEB 22** NAP IN: REST IN RESISTANCE ONLINE EVENT  
NOON-1:30PM

**FEB 27** KICKBACK CELEBRATION  
EASTFIELD CAMPUS THE HIVE  
11AM-1PM

**FEB 28** DEAR ME: SELF-LOVE LETTER TO MYSELF  
EASTFIELD CAMPUS THE HIVE  
NOON-1PM

**FEB 28** 'REST WELL SIS' BY KEUNA WEBSTER  
EASTFIELD CAMPUS THE HIVE  
NOON-1:30PM

**MAR 1** WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH KICKOFF HIGHLIGHTING BLACK WOMEN'S HISTORY  
EASTFIELD CAMPUS THE HIVE  
11:30AM-1:30PM

FIND MORE EVENTS AT  
[DALLASCOLLEGE.EDU/BLACKHISTORY](http://DALLASCOLLEGE.EDU/BLACKHISTORY)



# Black Americans who have impacted society in the past decade

By **VICTOR GARCIA**  
Contributor  
@TheEtCetera

When we think of accomplishments we usually go back in history and think about the discovery of electricity in the 1700s. However, there's no need to go too far back in history.

The past decade has been marked with great discoveries, accomplishments and decision making. As we enter Black History Month, here's a look at five Black Americans who have impacted society in the past decade.

## Government



**Raphael Warnock**

Raphael Warnock, the first Black U.S. senator from Georgia, has impacted and inspired people to go for the impossible. Warnock took the oath of office Jan. 20, 2021, after defeating opponent Herschel Walker in the Georgia runoff election.

The win led to the Democrats taking possession of the U.S. Senate with a 51-49 majority. During the election, Warnock was ahead by 37,000 votes but couldn't get to the 50% needed to avoid a runoff. Meanwhile, Walker used everything in his power to attract supporters. During the College Football Hall of Fame ceremony, Walker made it clear to his supporters that the fight wasn't over. However, this wasn't enough to take Warnock down.

Voters made sure to place him where they felt he belonged: the Senate. After the victory he went on to tell his supporters: "It is my honor to utter the four most powerful words ever spoken in a democracy: The people have spoken."

## Entertainment



**Spike Lee**

Shelton Jackson Lee, or Spike Lee as he's known, is a filmmaker who isn't afraid of tackling controversial issues.

"Blackkklansman," a 2018 movie that Lee directed, addresses race.

Other films include "Da 5 Bloods" released in 2020, which touches on civil rights issues, and "Miracle at St. Anna," a 2008 film about African American soldiers in World War II.

The movies earned Lee awards like the 2019 Academy Award for best adapted screenplay. In 2017, he won an Emmy for exceptional merit in nonfiction filmmaking, among other awards.

## Health



**Dr. Kizzmekia S. Corbett**

Dr. Kizzmekia S. Corbett is an immunologist and assistant professor of immunology and infectious diseases at Harvard Chan School. Corbett focuses on developing vaccines that will fight viruses such as COVID-19.

Corbett and her team of experts designed a vaccine with mRNA-1273 and later partnered with Moderna.

Only 66 days after the viral sequence release, the Moderna vaccine passed the phase 1 clinical trial.

After many tests and positive results in animal models and humans, the Moderna vaccine was approved after the phase 3 clinical trial, which made it safe for it to be distributed and used.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "Moderna's (vaccine) elicits a stronger immune response and might be better at preventing breakthrough infections."

Corbett's work resulted in her receiving the TIME Magazine Hero of the Year designation. Now Corbett fights against any misinformation about vaccines that might create confusion while developing new ways to enhance the medical field.

## Education



**Noah Harris**

During his first year at Harvard University, Harris decided to run for student government and became the secretary of the finance committee.

In his junior year, Harris knew he wanted to run for president.

Harris and his running mate, Jenny Gan, created a slogan: "Building Tomorrow's Harvard." The school's tradition is that usually at 11

p.m., the campaigns would receive a call to inform them about the results of their campaigns.

However, because of the COVID-19 pandemic there were changes. Harris and his partner received a call around 5:30 p.m. saying that they had won.

In 2020, Harris became the first Black man elected president of Harvard University's Undergraduate Council in the school's 384-year history.

## Military



**Sydney Barber**

Sydney Barber is the first Black woman to become brigade commander in the Navy. Barber is the 16th woman appointed as commander in the 44 years that women have attended the Naval Academy.

To get elected to this position, Barber had to stand out from 30 competitors.

During the process of becoming commander, Barber spent time mentoring young girls at a community center near the Naval Academy.

After George Floyd's death, Barber and other Black women at the academy organized the Midshipmen Diversity Team, in which they worked to promote empathy and inclusive leadership.

Barber has also focused on increasing the number of women at the academy. She started an event called the Black Female Network Breakfast.

During the breakfast, Black women at the academy come together to share experiences and advice.

Barber's mission is to build a team that can trust her and understands that its voice counts.



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**Dallas College Eastfield Campus**  
 3737 Motley Drive  
 Mesquite, TX 75150  
 Phone: 972-860-7130  
 Email: etc4640@dccc.edu

**Editor in Chief**  
 Moira McIntee

**Managing Editor**  
 Carmen Guzman

**Presentation Editor**  
 Mattheau Faught

**Photo Editor**  
 Rory Moore

**Page Designer**  
 Breanna Hernandez

**Graphic Designer**  
 Veronica Trejo

**Contributors**  
 Anthony Rosado  
 Tarra Crenshaw  
 Londy Ramirez  
 Alexia Munoz  
 Victor Garcia

**Publication Adviser**  
 Elizabeth Langton

**Student Media Adviser**  
 Natalie Webster

**Faculty Adviser**  
 Lori Dann

The views expressed on the opinion pages and other opinion pieces and cartoons in this publication are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the views of The Et Cetera, Dallas College. The Et Cetera is published by a student staff.

**First Amendment Right**

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.

**Letters to the Editor**

Letters must be typed, signed and include a phone number. Letters will be edited for profanity and vulgarity, Associated Press style, grammar, libel and space when needed. The content will remain that of the author. Letters should be no longer than 250 words.

**ABOUT THE COVER**

An image generated utilizing Midjourney, then painted over by graphic designer Mattheau Faught.

OUR VIEW

## TikTok bans start necessary conversation

The urgency to ban TikTok on college campus networks highlights the Texas government's ignorance of another issue: mental health.

The presumed threat to national security by the Chinese government's data audits is a valid concern, but we wish government officials showed the same regard for the developing minds of the nation's youth.

The campus network ban of TikTok could be seen as a risk to freedom of speech, which is not something we support.

However, at least it allows us to talk about the very real and confirmed issues social media can have.

According to a 2019 article published by American Psychological Association, mental health issues in adolescents, specifically those born in 1995 or later, have increased significantly since the mid-2000s.

"Individuals who spend more time on social media and less time with others face-to-face report lower well-being and are more likely to be depressed," the report reads. "Likewise, both general Internet use and involvement in cyberbullying (as victim or perpetrator) have been associated with depression, self-harm, and suicidal thoughts and behaviors."

The same increase in mental health issues was not found in older adults.

This TikTok ban brings up the conversation about social media, but we need to address the other related issues.

Media literacy and thoughtful scrolling should be taught before smartphones are given to children and teens.

Frequent breaks from social media can lower levels of anxiety, depression, loneliness and sleep problems, according to a 2018 University of Phila-

delphia report.

During the study on which the report is based, 143 undergraduates were randomly assigned to limit certain social media platforms for three weeks.

This group showed significant decreases in mental health distress compared to the control group.

Unfortunately, it took an app's ability to circumvent U.S. privacy laws to put social media use on the forefront of the government's agenda. But why has the issue of social media fallen through the cracks for so long?

Texas ranks last in the nation in mental health care access, according to NPR.

Something should be done about the staggering presence of digital media in the lives of students, but what is done needs to prioritize mental health.

## Cancel culture doing more harm than good

Cancel culture, once an impetus for social change and justice, has become a weapon used to attack and dismantle the lives of anyone that it doesn't agree with.

Though there have been some notable and righteous victories associated with cancel culture, such as Harvey Weinstein, R. Kelly and Bill Cosby, no one talks about its innocent victims like Constance Wu, Daphne Dorman and Scott Cawthon, whose cancellations were not because of any heinous action but because of unpopular opinion.

Wu is a prominent Asian American actress best known for her role in the Oscar-winning film "Crazy Rich Asians." In May of 2019, Wu went on Twitter to show her lack of enthusiasm after finding out the popular TV sitcom "Fresh Off the Boat" had been renewed for another season.

She tweeted, "so upset right now that I'm literally crying ugh." Wu was called "ungrateful and ungraceful." She was also categorized as a diva and inconsiderate of other cast members.

Wu was ostracized by fans, and some friends turned away from her. Wu attempted suicide in 2019 but was helped by a friend and admitted to a psychiatric emergency facility. Wu has received psychiatric counsel-

Tarra Crenshaw  
 @TheEtCetera



ing for her mental health and has been open about her experience.

Cawthon, known for the immense success of the "Five Nights at Freddy's" video game series, found himself in hot water after information posted on OpenSecrets landed on Twitter showing he had donated to the political campaigns of several politicians including former President Donald Trump and Senate Republican Mitch McConnell. Cawthon was then labeled guilty by association and was deemed racist and homophobic by his African American and LGBT gamers because of his political contributions.

What the masses had failed to realize is that he donated to politicians of all kinds: Black, white, Republican and Democratic. In a note posted to his Reddit account, Cawthon explained why he had done so, but to no avail. With threats mounting and the desire to protect his family, Cawthon removed himself from the series and was forced to retire.



VERONICA TREJO/THE ET CETERA

"I have always loved, and will continue to love, this community and this fanbase, even if someday it doesn't include me anymore," he said.

If you've watched Dave Chappelle's Netflix special "Sticks and Stones," then you know who Dorman is. Dorman was a transgender comedian, activist in the community and a good friend of Chappelle's. Chappelle's special included jokes about the LGBT community that were deemed transphobic. Dorman had been to previous shows and came to the defense of Chappelle.

She tweeted several times in support of Chappelle and the special. In the weeks following, Dorman was swarmed by threats from the trans community and labeled a traitor. In October 2019 Dorman died by suicide, leaving behind a daughter and two sisters.

Prior to her death, Dorman posted a suicide note on her Facebook page. "I'm sorry," it read. "I've thought about this a lot before this morning. How do you say 'goodbye' and 'I'm sorry' and 'I love you' to all the beautiful souls you know? For the last time..."

Cancel culture is said to be justice for marginalized people who can't always be heard by conventional means. But we have turned it into a weapon of destruction fueled by sensationalism, lack of understanding and lack of empathy. It has become a bully that couldn't care less if it causes suicide, mental instability or puts the lives of others in danger.

We need to open our eyes to what cancel culture has become and turn it back to its intended purpose: a tool for justice and a way for those who have suffered to be heard, helped and healed.

Wednesday, February 15, 2023

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## Eastfield fights to make it to nationals

By **ANTHONY ROSADO**  
 Contributor  
 @TheEtCetera

The Eastfield basketball team has experienced some setbacks since returning from the holiday break, losing four players and dropping three straight conference games.

However, coach Dexter Young believes the Harvester Bees (17-6) can still make it to the national tournament.

“If we start clicking, we can go to the national championship,” Young said. “I don’t care how many games we’ve lost. We have enough athletes, enough talent, to do that.”

With three games left in the regular season, Eastfield is 3-3 in conference play, beating Cedar Valley 110-85, Mountain View 125-115 and Cedar Valley again 108-89, while losing to Brookhaven 86-85, North Lake 77-69 and Richland 109-105.

“It’s basically all on us. If we play how we play, we’re unstoppable,” freshman guard Jakeiven Sanders said. “But if we play down to our competition, or try to play with our competition, it’s not gonna go so well.”

For most of this season Eastfield has been scoring more than 100 points per game, but in two of their conference losses, they only scored 85 and 69 points.

Young said he wants his team to play more aggressively and pick up the pace.

“We’re not going to pass the ball more than three times before a shot,” he said. “We want to shoot the ball and go real fast.”

Eastfield uses a balanced offense, with six players averaging double figures in scoring.

“We don’t have one guy,” Young said. “I want everybody on the team to take 10 or more shots. That means you’re taking 100 [shots]. At one time, we were averaging 96 shots.”

Despite the recent offensive struggles, Eastfield still leads the nation in points per game (114.5), field goals made per game (42), field goal attempts per game (88.6), three-pointers made per game (13.3), three-point attempts per game (37.4) and steals per game (25). They are also second in free throws made per game (17.3) and assists per game (26.1).

“The three back-to-back-to-back games we lost, it was because we played at their pace,” Sanders said. “We slowed down, walked the ball down slow, trying to set it up. And we can’t do that.”

The Harvester Bees have an important week ahead, facing Brookhaven, Richland and defending national champion North Lake to end the regular season.

If their offense can push the pace like Young wants, he believes they can make it to nationals.

“I feel good about the team,” Young said. “We’re young. I’m just waiting for that switch to hit. We can win it all, without a doubt. We can beat anyone and beat them bad.”



RORY MOORE/THE ET CETERA

DQuarius Burton tries to score against tough defense by Richland’s Bryce Harris.



### Eastfield wins doubleheader on new turf

The Harvester Bees swept a doubleheader against DFW Post Grad on Feb. 10 in their first games on their new turf. Left, Adam Qualkenbush received a signed home plate from the old field and a jersey he wore as a former member of the team for his help with construction of the new turf. Manny Moore, above, led Eastfield in the first game of the doubleheader, going 2-for-2 with a triple, a double and two runs scored.

# Artists discuss AI trend

“Skill Issue” by Mattheau Faught

Continued from Page 5

they’re curious, and we shouldn’t fault them for trying something new,” Araujo said.

Land also fears the new technology could impact his students.

“It’s going to affect jobs,” Land said, “Not necessarily take jobs away from people but it’s going to add more people that necessarily don’t have the skill set to do it. And as a graphic designer, or even an illustrator, it makes having a living that much harder.”

Stephens believes the market will decide whether AI beats out traditional skillsets.

“If we as people, as consumers, as art and design appreciators, collectively find a way to say no, that’s not good enough, that’s not enough, that’s not fulfilling, that’s not exciting, and we can do more than why aren’t we doing it? Then it’s supply and demand,” Stephens said.

There’s still the concern about how AI will shape the future art and design industries. Land believes a niche for trained artists would eventually arise in a post-AI art world, which he called a “renaissance.” Biggers shared a similar sentiment.

“There’s going to be somebody that comes in and says ‘hey, I miss when things looked

like this,’ and that’s going to be the opportunity for physical human artists to be able to put their human imperfections into things,” Biggers said. “At a certain point when things get too polished, the real kind of comes back to the forefront.”

On the topic of artists fearing displacement, Stephens expressed the importance of passion and dedication.

“Whether this technology existed or not, you have to find your voice,” Stephens said. “You need a very specific style, you need to be committed to what you do, you need to know who you are, and just be all in on your authentic voice and viewpoint. AI art or not, you need that to be successful.”

Araujo suggests this technology could help future artists rather than invalidate what they have to communicate.

“When we’re afraid for our jobs because of technology we forget that we, as professionals, also evolve,” Araujo said.

Biggers also believes artists need to focus on what’s in front of them now and worry about AI art later.

“Just do what you can while you can and then if it changes. Worry about that when it gets here,” he said. “But until then, just grind it out and see what happens.”



RORY MOORE/THE ET CETERA

## Eastfield greets students after winter break with games, food live music

A welcome bash was hosted by Student Life and Engagement in the Hive on Jan. 26. Above, Valeria Moreno and Abigail Ramirez play connect 4 while the band Six Clicks performed for the participants.

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