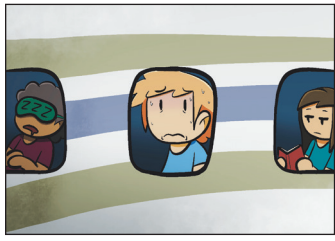




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Americans should not have to fear airplane accidents



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Men's basketball seeks revenge against TCU



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OSCARS:
Film's biggest night was full of snubs, speeches, sweeps

In case you missed it...

Scholarship initiative aims to raise \$250 million by 2030

The Extend the Line scholarship aims to raise \$250 million by 2030 to enhance student scholarships and ensure that a Baylor education remains accessible and affordable.

It invites alumni, parents, faculty, staff and friends to contribute to strengthen the university's commitment to affordability amid rising tuition costs.



Oregon State squeezes past Baylor baseball at Globe Life

On the first pitch of the top of the seventh inning, Baylor freshman third baseman Pearson Riebock smashed a fly ball to right-center field. Primed to trot around the bases for the first time in his career, No. 8 Oregon State junior right fielder Easton Talt had other plans.

Talt chased it back to the warning track and timed his running jump in front of the home bullpen.



Crocheting, knitting make a comeback, hooking Gen Z

With the rise of social media, interest has grown in what many call "grandma activities" — including baking, puzzles, gardening and, most notably, crocheting and knitting.

According to Kheyo Mag, a blog from an online crochet and yarn entrepreneur, crochet is making a big comeback. The publication notes that crocheting is experiencing a resurgence because people enjoy the satisfaction of creating something with their hands. In other words, the appeal of handcrafted items is stronger than ever.



'INNOVATE, CREATE, PUSH THE FRONTIER'

As AI capabilities expand, tech optimism abounds in the Paul L. Foster Campus for Business and Innovation — and the job market

DELANEY NEWHOUSE
Focus Editor

Baylor Angel Network hosted speakers at the Paul L. Foster Campus for Business and Innovation on Thursday to discuss the potential of investing in humanoid robotic technology and cryptocurrencies.

Members of the network, which seeks to invest in early-stage startups, joined students and faculty to hear about the future of the economy from two different but optimistic perspectives.

Chris Camillo, a former researcher for the BAN and current social arbitrage investor, spoke about companies developing autonomous robots to have sources of infinite labor. Camillo said that these developments would not only combat a future labor shortage but transform the economy by redefining work.

"What's happening right now with specifically embodied AI and humanoid robots is the biggest thing of our lifetime and maybe in the history of this country," Camillo said. "Most of what we do today as jobs, people 75, 80 years ago would not agree is a job. ... What will become a job in 2050, we will laugh at."

Camillo said Austin company

Apronix as the one he believed was closest to developing the necessary technologies to fully automate many menial tasks. Apronix is among the companies racing to finish developing the necessary actuator — energy conversion — technology, sensors and coordination between robot limbs these projects would require.

If Camillo's prediction of a labor shortage of anywhere from 50 to 350 million people by 2030 is correct, then any alternate source of labor could be essential to maintaining the nation's GDP. However, these robots incorporating AI may not come as soon as some investors hope.

Self-driving cars, another promised technology from the automation industry, have consistently failed to meet the industry's reported standards. In 2015, Tesla company owner Elon Musk is clipped in an interview with Danish news publication Børsen saying self-driving vehicles would soon be available to purchase.

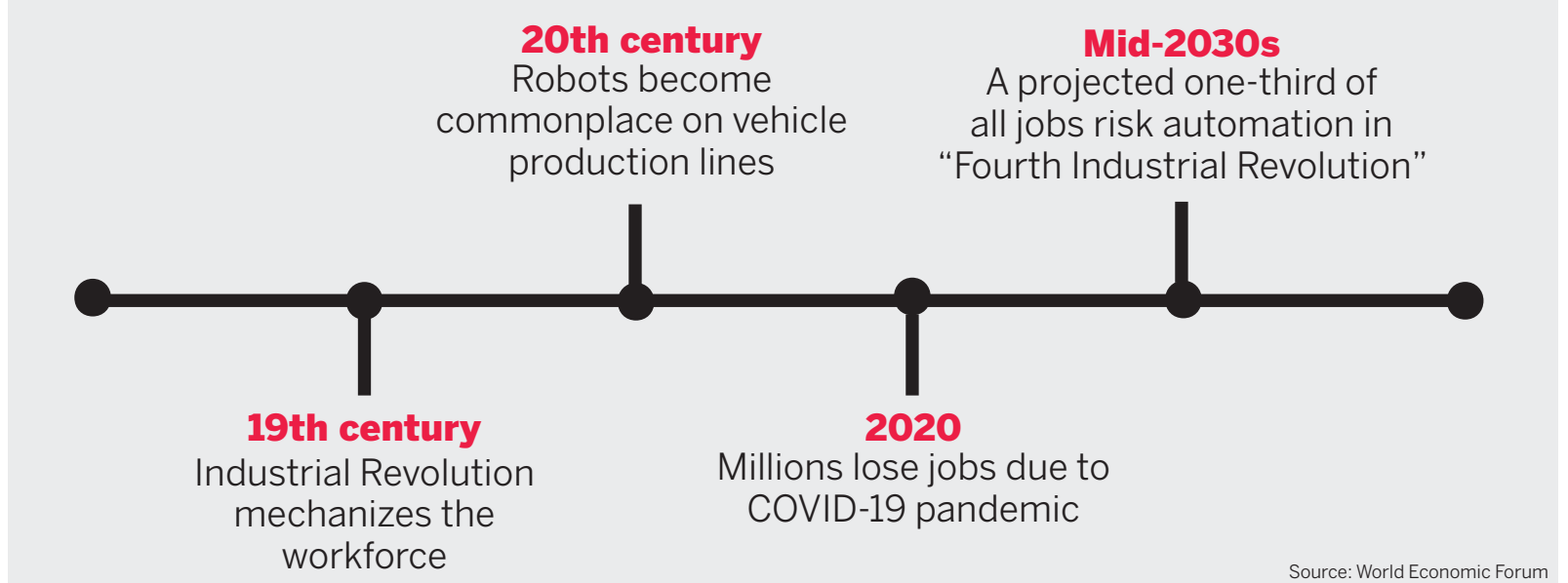
As of yet, they are not. The second speaker, Devin Baker, a crypto fund owner, focused far less on the applications of AI and focused more on the world of cryptocurrency. Only weeks out from a shocking



Mesha Mittanasala | Photographer

AUTOMATING OPTIMISM On Thursday, the Baylor Angel Network hosted speakers at the Paul L. Foster Campus for Business and Innovation to focus on investing in early-stage startups.

AI OPTIMISM >> A8



R1 still ours

Faculty react to impacts of Baylor's renewed R1 status

ELLIOTT NACE
Staff Writer

The university's status as a "very high research activity" R1 institution was retained following the release of the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education's report earlier this month. President Linda Livingstone wrote in her Feb. 13 Presidential Perspective that Baylor's research investment soundly indicated the reaffirmation of the label, with figures far exceeding the base requirements.

The university, which first attained the R1 designation in 2021, continues to expand its research portfolio by hiring and endorsing faculty researchers who benefit from increased funding and the development of new research infrastructure.

Dr. Christoph Fischbacher, assistant professor of mathematics, noted that there is a level of academic diversity found across the university's mathematics research.



Mary Thurmond | Photo Editor

RESEARCH POWERHOUSE First recognized as a Research 1 university in 2021, Baylor continues to invest in research and doctoral education.

"We have people working in analysis, some more on the differential operator side and also [some] colleagues working in mathematical physics," he said. "Mathematical physics is an interesting field in the sense that the problems we're looking at are more motivated coming from physics, and we try to get results answering

questions arising from physics, but in a rigorous way."

Dr. Jeremy Uecker, interim chair of sociology, who arrived at Baylor in 2012, explained how faculty additions have also contributed to the widening of departmental research.

"We currently have five

R1 RENEWED >> A8

AI tool revamps research, study

JAMES LAIRD
Reporter

Advancements in AI have changed academia in a multitude of ways, including how students learn to study. Now, AI is helping how faculty and students conduct their research. Scopus research database has added the Scopus AI tool that utilizes AI in pulling resources and information from across their databases, and Baylor students and faculty have access to this tool.

Scopus has joined other academic research databases in adding AI search as tools in their offerings. The AI operates by pulling information across their database to create summaries of topics and direct the user to related academic articles.

According to Billie Peterson-Lugo, associate dean of library collections, systems and digital services, the idea is that this process will streamline the researching process for students and faculty.

"[Scopus AI] can give you a nice overview, and it can give you some ideas of who's important in the area," Peterson-Lugo said. "If you've got to write a paper on this topic and really are trying to figure out more about it ... you can find a place where you can write a topic."

Peterson-Lugo said a benefit of Scopus AI is that most of the articles it pulls are peer-reviewed and beneficial for research. Peterson-Lugo believes and has heard that Scopus AI and other AI powered research databases provide students and faculty with a useful tool in their research.

"[Scopus AI] would be helpful to a faculty member or graduate student that maybe is doing higher level research, that maybe the AI will help them discover information that was more difficult [to be] discovered previously," Peterson-Lugo said.

While AI-assisted

NEW TOOL >> A8

GOT SOMETHING TO SAY?

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Americans should not have to fear flying

THE EDITORIAL BOARD

Aviophobia, the fear of flying, is one of the most commonly admitted fears in the world.

Around 25 million Americans are those you might notice gripping their armrests a little tighter than others when taking off or breaking a visible sweat when turbulence takes over. For years, this fear has been laughed off because as everyone knows, flying is the safest way to get from one place to another. Unfortunately, this fear of flying has become heightened and more validated than ever within a mere matter of months.

Before 2025, the most recent deadly plane crash involving a U.S. airliner occurred in 2009. So far, there have been four crashes in less than 50 days in the U.S., claiming the lives of 85 people. Another flight from Minneapolis crashed in Toronto on Feb. 17. Thankfully, there were no casualties, but several injuries were reported.

Tragedies like these — in which the victims had no hand in causing or preventing — are extremely unsettling and disturbing, especially when they are avoidable. The lives of these passengers are left entirely in the hands of the pilots, air traffic controllers, airlines, the tech companies behind these air traffic management systems and of course the Federal Aviation Administration. That's a lot of trust. If these airlines aren't properly executing procedures or receiving sufficient funds to operate safely, that's a major issue.

In comparison to commonplace modes of transportation like cars and buses, planes can carry more — hundreds of passengers in a single trip — which means more lives are at risk. Just because plane crashes are exponentially rare, these deaths and injuries are not something to just brush aside and play the blame game with.

Although we don't have the full report now, several factors are pointing to the cause of these crashes, and DEI is not one of them. Miscommunication between controllers and pilots, disconnection from communication and severe weather conditions are a few of the suspected causes. But what lies at the root of these glitches?

After the crash at the Ronald Reagan



James Ellis | Cartoonist

Washington National Airport, the Trump Administration fired several hundred FAA employees, leaving their already understaffed team with even fewer helping hands. Though the employees who held these roles were not labeled as "critical" in terms of safety, they had considerable influence on the roles that are. When a situation becomes life or death, no cuts should be made from a team that works to ensure safety, especially when one tragedy has already occurred.

As a result of these crashes, Americans' trust in the safety of flying has dropped, according to a poll conducted by the Associated Press NORC Center for Public Affairs Research. While some people may be able to avoid flying

for the most part, others may depend on it for their livelihoods. We must demand caution and care from these airlines.

While the actual flying bit is out of the control of your average Joe, there are still things to be done. Talk to your congressional representative and urge them to take measures to help ensure safer flying. Show them that you care and that this issue is pressing enough for you to have gone out of your way to make that call.

If you plan on flying in the near future, be sure to read whatever safety pamphlet is tucked in the seat in front of you. Give your time and full attention to the flight attendants as they run through the

emergency procedures after onboarding. Ask questions if you have them. Locate your emergency exits as soon as you sit down. Volunteer to sit in the exit row if you are strong and able-bodied. While we don't have control, we have the initiative to promote our own safety as much as possible.

Flying is still the safest form of transportation in the world, even after these crashes. But the impact incidents like these have on people cannot be denied. Those passengers who died were people with families, passions and futures. Those who loved them will miss them until their dying days. These are real, human lives we're talking about, so those in charge had better start acting like it.

Don't forget their names and powerful bravery — Title IX and Baylor women

MACKENZIE GRIZZARD

Staff Writer



When you think Title IX at Baylor, most are immediately transported back to 2016, where a sexual assault scandal rocked a football team up to the office of the president.

The blatant mishandling of sexual misconduct and Title IX complaints during that time is a whole issue itself. But too often, we forget the catalysts behind it all — the brave women that spoke up against an institution with endless resources.

This is about them. Title IX is about uplifting the voices of wronged women, but far too often, we see the women themselves forgotten and discredited.

2016 wasn't the only year in Baylor's history that the university made some questionable decisions regarding sexual harassment claims. The first whispered warning came just two years prior in 2014, when Baylor was found negligent in Dolores Lozano's lawsuit, which claimed the university did not adequately respond to her multiple claims of physical assaults perpetrated by a then Baylor football player.

Rewind a hundred years or so, Antônia Teixeira met a similar fate at the hands of a young Baylor administration, that silenced and discredited the sexual assault she endured in the President's own backyard.

She wasn't referred to as Antônia, or even Ms. Teixeira in several of the court documents — just as "that Brazilian girl."

But I'm sure both of these names probably don't ring a bell. For most of you, Art Briles and Ken Starr might sound a little more familiar.

Bravery is a subjective term at times. Our Navy SEALs are brave in their measures to defend their country, and I'm a brave college girl for attending the one class I have on Fridays.

But many of us can't imagine the bravery it takes to fight for justice against powerful people, universities and even entire governments. Standing alone is scary enough, but standing alone against your perpetrator and their entire institution is truly terrifying.

This isn't meant to disparage Baylor's administration and Title IX efforts because much of it has changed and developed for the better. There were 15 women who spoke out against Baylor football in the 2016 scandal. I guarantee most of you reading this could not name one of them. That's the point I'm trying to make.

Because that's just how it goes; most can't name the 87 women that were victimized by Harvey Weinstein, or the 18 that accused President Trump.

Women are the common denominators in sexual misconduct cases like these. From Hollywood to government and even to Baylor, women become more than victims of a grotesque crime — they become symbols of strength.

Their names matter infinitely more than their perpetrators do.

There's nothing quite like seeing women band together over a shared experience. Globally, 1 in 3 women have experienced sexual violence in their lives according to the World Health Organization. Bet you can't name those names either.

Obviously, memorizing millions of names isn't realistic. But I encourage you to remember why Title IX exists in the first place.

It exists for women like Antônia Teixeira, Dolores Lozano and all the other strong and brave women who fell through the cracks of their universities. They are the heart of Baylor's female majority and should be remembered as such.



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Basketball's Senior Night



Mary Thurmond | Photo Editor

FAMILY FIRST Baylor men's basketball seniors pose with their friends, families and plaques following their senior night ceremony before their game against OSU on Saturday night.



Brady Harris | Photographer

REACH 5th year forward Norhcad Omier reaches to steal the rebound from OSU graduate forward Patrick Suemnick.



Mesha Mittanasala | Photographer

THROUGH THE WIRE Senior guard Yaya Felder fights the defense to get to the basket before a shot clock violation.



Sarah Andrews (24)



Brady Harris | Photographer

CROSSED UP Freshman guard Robert O. Wright III analyzes the defense before going in for a layup.



Mary Thurmond | Photo Editor

SHOWIN' OFF Baylor women's basketball seniors line up for a group picture after their senior night ceremony before their matchup against TCU on Sunday.

Baylor is Fulbright Top Producer for third-straight cycle

JOSH SIATKOWSKI
Staff Writer

Upon confirming a spot on the 2024-2025 Fulbright Scholarship Top Producers list, Baylor officially locked in its third-straight year as a prestigious Fulbright-producing powerhouse.

The Fulbright Program, which offers U.S. government-funded experiences to recent college graduates, has been accepting more Bears than ever. Eighteen Baylor graduates received a 2024-2025 Fulbright scholarship and a record 48 have been named semi-finalists for the 2025-2026 school year.

According to Dr. Anna Beaudry, assistant director of major fellowships and awards, semi-finalists and winners have been consistently growing in recent years. In 2022, Baylor saw 14 Bears win a Fulbright, 12 in 2023 and there were 34 semi-finalists turned into a record 18 winners in 2024.

This year, Baylor's number of semi-finalists has increased by over 40%, reaching 48. According to Beaudry, the hope for over 20 winners for this year could be attainable.

That would give Baylor another record year of Fulbright scholarship students, something the university has done time and time again. It would also earn

them a fourth-straight — and fourth all-time — spot on the Fulbright Top Producers list, which, at 130 institutions, is longer than you might expect.

The Fulbright Program is primarily divided into two scholarships. Like a typical educational scholarship, Open Study and Research Awards match students to participating schools to complete a graduate degree or research project. There's also the English Teaching Assistant Award, which sends select students to a country chosen in their application and places them within a community to assist local English teachers.

While Baylor has produced graduates who matriculate into the Open Study and Research Scholarship, the vast majority of Baylor Fulbright students have gone into the ETA program.

"ETA odds are far better than the study awards," Beaudry said. "As you can imagine, there are far fewer awards that cover a graduate degree than a teaching position. So the majority of our winners tend to be in the ETA category."

Due to the disparity in odds, the Office of Engaged Learning ends up playing a bit of a numbers game. Beaudry and Dr. Daniel Benyousky, the director of major fellowships and awards, assist students interested in any type of

program, but Beaudry said they encourage the ETA program to students, citing the better chances.

"Numbers aren't everything, but they aren't nothing," Beaudry said.

Though it's a teaching fellowship, Beaudry said that the program is available and helpful to students of all academic backgrounds. Beaudry encourages students to have "an open mind throughout the process," and to consider the benefits of an ETA for those not interested in teaching or language.

"The fact of the matter is, graduate schools, medical schools, law schools — all of these places love to have Fulbrighters," Beaudry said. "So you could have access to a much higher tier of graduate degrees by doing an ETA."

Richland, Wash. senior Kristen Nakamura said the benefits of an ETA are vast, even for someone not interested in teaching children for a career. A university scholar studying English and a semi-finalist for an ETA in Indonesia, Nakamura is not necessarily sold on teaching upon completing the program. But Nakamura still sees benefit to the program regarding her interest in Asian American literature.

"[Going to Indonesia] would be a great way to not only get teaching experience



Lariat File Photo

FULBRIGHT POWERHOUSE For the third-straight cycle, Baylor made the Fulbright Scholarship Top Producers list with 48 semi-finalists for the current cycle.

but to immerse myself in a culture," Nakamura said. "I think it will help me as I navigate talking about different cultures in Asian American literature."

However, Nakamura wasn't originally considering a Fulbright scholarship until she met others who expressed their feelings about the program.

"I had heard of a couple other university scholars who were applying to a Fulbright or had already been accepted, so it was really through talking to them," Nakamura

said. "I think it really took that personal experience, like going to interest meetings, hearing from Dr. Benyousky and Dr. Beaudry and talking to my friends."

Beaudry said that this interaction with other students is a key reason behind Baylor's recent Fulbright boom. The chance to meet with peers does wonders to "demystify" the highly competitive program.

"With these awards, students initially hear about opportunities like this and think, 'There's no way I

could win that. That's not something that's achievable for me,'" Beaudry said. "But odds are that you have rubbed shoulders with someone who's on our winner list, and when that's someone you were in a class with, or a roommate, or someone in your major, all of a sudden it feels less daunting."

Applications for the 2026-2027 Fulbright cycle will open in April 2025. Interested students can reach out to Beaudry or Benyousky with questions.

Baylor community gathers together for Collegiate Day of Prayer

KRISTY VOLMERT
Staff Writer

On Thursday the Baylor community celebrated National Collegiate Day of Prayer, observed annually on the last Thursday of February.

Hours of prayer filled the Paul L. Foster Campus for Business and Innovation prayer room from 8 a.m. to around 5 p.m., as students and faculty gathered throughout the day to pray for colleges across the globe. A worship service was held in the lobby later that evening.

Collegiate Day of Prayer began in 1815 and has since been dedicated to intentional, multi-generational and global prayer over college students and their entire institutions.

The Collegiate Day of Prayer's live service is hosted by different universities each year and broadcast online for audiences across the country. Texas A&M University hosted the event this year, revival sweeping through the seats of Rudder Auditorium in College Station. It was hosted at Baylor in Waco Hall last year.

Students gathered in the Bobo Spiritual Life Center at 7 p.m. to watch the livestream and participate in prayer and worship.

McLennan Community College sophomore Hannah Duhon attended last night's event and said that seeing how much the spirit is moving

in her generation gave her hope.

"Getting to see college students seeking the Lord and praising Him is such a relief to see," she said. "Growing up, I worried people my age did not want to follow God, did not believe in Him or did not believe in the power of prayer."

Duhon said she was very encouraged to see what God is doing in the lives of so many college students and encourages others to be in prayer for continuous revival.

Speakers from a multitude of universities, states and countries shared testimonies of revival and spiritual awakening across college campuses.

One of these speakers was Drew Humphrey, college pastor of local Highland Baptist Church. He gave a testimony on the revival we have seen on Baylor's campus and across Waco.

"Radical unity and radical prayer have spurred on an extraordinary movement of God at Baylor University over the past seven years," he said.

Humphrey also shared the impact of FM72, an annual event in which the community gathers on Fountain Mall for 72 hours of prayer and nightly worship.

"Every year, we see thousands of college students come to this field," he said. "We've seen hundreds of salvations, baptisms and supernatural healings ... we've seen deliverance

from the darkest struggles of the soul."

FM72 2025 will take place March 24 to 27. According to Duhon, the BSM at MCC will host their own version of FM72 the first week of April, with 12 hours of prayer on Star Plaza.

"We're really excited about it," she said. Ukarumpa, Papua New Guinea sophomore Rebekah Ellis also attended the livestream last night.

"It was a really cool event where we were able to come together as the global church and pray for revival in the world," she said. "I was encouraged to see that people from all over the world wanted to gather together and pray for colleges."

Ellis encourages people to be in prayer for Christians at universities to have the boldness to share their faith wherever they go.



Maggie Meegan | Photographer

POWER OF PRAYER Students gathered at the Foster Campus for Business and Innovation prayer room for National Collegiate Day of Prayer on Thursday.

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'Supported in every aspect'

Baylor fitness group proves girls get gains, too

SHANE MEAD
Staff Writer

When Phoenix junior Aleah Schippers was in her sophomore year of high school, she suffered a major hip injury that required surgery and an extended break from competitive dancing. After recovering, Schippers said getting back into doing physical activities was something she never got around to. She even attempted going to the gym a few times with her friends, but did not enjoy it.

Fast forward five years, and Schippers is now the president of GAIN at Baylor, an all-female organization that boosts both the physical and mental wellness of its members.

"I joined GAIN hoping to find something that I really liked, and that's how I got into lifting," Schippers said. "I definitely would not prioritize my health and exploring different aspects of workouts without the club having such a positive, uplifting community of other girls. That's super hard to find sometimes."

The variety of workouts is something GAIN heavily emphasizes, Schippers said. The organization offers them to entice women of all fitness backgrounds to join the club without leaving anyone high and dry.

Part of being a member means attending three studio sessions throughout the semester, each of which "challenges the girls to do something they're not comfortable with," Schippers said.

Each challenge must be different, encouraging members to branch out during their wellness journey and explore what could potentially be their new preferred form of working out.

"I feel like the girls really enjoy having all of the different options because sometimes it may be intimidating and they never really had the courage to do it," Schippers said. "But they get to [try new things] since it's such a safe space, and then they'll end up loving something that they never thought they would enjoy."



Photo courtesy of GAIN

THE IRON-PUMPING LADIES The GAIN workout organization poses for a photo at REFIT Studio, a fitness studio in Waco. The organization immerses its members in boxing, lifting, walking, jazzercise, HIIT, yoga, cycling, pilates and crossfit workouts, among many others.

Creating a safe space for all women in fitness is something that Orange County, Calif. junior Charlie Banks, GAIN's wellness chair, view as a vital aspect of the club's promotion of wellness.

"We've made a big point about how we are here to support our girls in any step of their fitness journey," Banks said. "It doesn't matter if they are used to going to the gym all of the time or if they have never set foot in the gym before."

Schippers takes advantage of her gym pass perks by encouraging members to join her in the weight room.

"[Schippers] does 'lifts with the president' because with her membership, she can bring a guest," Banks said. "The idea was to foster a community of girls that would support each other and go to the gym together."

But not all progress is shown in the gym, Banks said. As wellness chair, her job also requires her to ensure her members are doing just as good mentally as they are physically.

Reaching out to members, devising workout plans to assist with time management and offering resources on and off campus are just a few of the many things Banks says she does for her members.

"We just really want to make it so that our girls feel like they are supported in every aspect," Banks said.

A membership for GAIN at Baylor costs \$30 and comes with various studio and campus workouts, social events, a membership T-shirt and more. Memberships last a full semester and must be renewed to continue.

Though the membership is full of perks, Schippers says the biggest one is the feeling

of belonging she gets when working out with her members.

"I feel like the scariest thing for women specifically is just feeling comfortable in a gym and that people aren't looking at them and judging them," she said. "That's just not the case, especially when you are in such a positive community of other girls as well. Everybody's there to uplift each other and I really love that. It's amazing."

For women who feel intimidated to get into the fitness industry but may not be interested in joining GAIN, Schippers encourages trying anyway, because the gym community is more accepting than they may think.

"No matter what fitness level you're at, everyone is going to appreciate that you're there working on yourself," she said. "It's not scary at all, honestly."

Best moments at the 2025 Oscars

BELLA WHITMORE
Intern

Another year of the Oscars has come and gone, and luckily, this year's award ceremony did not disappoint with its entertaining moments and many well-deserved wins. Of course, there were a fair share of snubs and awkward moments, but that's what makes the Oscars a must-watch for film lovers and the general public alike every year.

I can't talk about every single award win from Sunday night, so I am going to limit it to the big five: Best Supporting Actor, Best Supporting Actress, Best Actor, Best Actress and Best Film, plus a few memorable moments sprinkled in throughout.

BEST SUPPORTING ACTOR: KIERAN CULKIN

Kieran Culkin won Best Supporting Actor for his role in "A Real Pain." I don't think this came as a surprise to anyone — he was projected to win this award and was sweeping at other award shows as well. It was well-deserved, and he gave one of the most authentic and charming speeches of the night.

BEST SUPPORTING ACTRESS: ZOE SALDANA

The Best Supporting Actress winner also came as a shock, with Zoe Saldana winning for "Emilia Pérez." Her acting was the only redeeming part of the film. The passion she poured into it is very evident, so I don't mind her going home with the win. She also gave a very heartfelt and sweet speech which I enjoyed.

Speaking of "Emilia Pérez," there was an awkward moment that is now taking the world by storm. When "El Mal" won for Best Original Song, the songwriters began singing into the microphones for an uncomfortable amount of time. It was unclear what the goal was here, but it was strange and weird — yet



Photo courtesy of AP

OVERJOYED AT THE OSCARS Alex Coco, winner of the award for Best Film for "Anora," and Mikey Madison, winner of the award for Best Actress for "Anora," embrace at the Governors Ball after the Oscars on Sunday night.

still entertaining. I was just relieved to see "Emilia Pérez" capped at two Oscars, honestly.

BEST ACTOR: ADRIEN BRODY

Back to the winners! If Adrien Brody had a nickel for every time he won the Best Actor category for a Holocaust film, he'd have two nickels — which isn't a lot but it's weird that it's happened twice, right? All jokes aside, I think he was phenomenal in this film. My personal choice would have been Ralph Fiennes in "Conclave" for his captivating performance, given the fact that he's long overdue for Academy recognition and I just love him. Furthermore, Brody's speech was far too long and came off slightly arrogant.

BEST ACTRESS: MIKEY MADISON

For me, this is where it gets good. Mikey Madison went home with

the Oscar for Best Actress for her portrayal of the titular character in "Anora" which I was truly ecstatic about. Her dedication and pure talent are on full display in that film. She undoubtedly is the heartbeat of the story.

BEST FILM: "ANORA"

"Anora" also went home with the award for Best Picture, and I could not think of a better choice. This film is the definition of everything beautiful and authentic — from the writing, to the acting performances, to the balance between humor and tragedy. I am an "Anora" defender until the day I die, and I love to see Sean Baker and independent films getting their well-deserved flowers.

Lastly, I would just like to thank Hulu for cutting the livestream right before best actress and best picture were announced and forcing me to frantically buy a FuboTV free trial. Moral of the story: make sure you use a different streaming platform to view next year's Oscars.



A&L Tuesdays: March 4

OLIVIA TURNER
Arts & Life Editor

Forbidden love seems to be a theme in this week's Tuesdays. If you enjoy Halsey, Malcolm Todd, Omar Apollo and Gigi Perez, you're going to want to tune in. Here are some new songs to get you through those last few days of midterms until spring break.

"SAFWORD" BY HALSEY (FEB. 27)

Halsey is going down a new road — a very punky, sassy road — with her new single, "safword." I've really enjoyed watching Halsey stray from traditional pop over the years, exploring her abilities and dipping her toes into genres such as folk, alternative, rock and now, punk rock. My initial response to hearing this song was that the sound was really giving "Deceptacon" by Le Tigre vibes — one of the most iconic punk bands of the early 2000s.

"BLEED (FEAT. OMAR APOLLO)" BY MALCOLM TODD (FEB. 28)

Synth, bass and drums introduce a duet I've been waiting on a long time: Malcolm Todd and Omar Apollo. Before the Jan. 19 TikTok ban, Apollo teased this song on his account, saying "Wait, let me leak another song before this app gets banned."

This track is exactly what I would have imagined from these two — a dark romance story of torn longing, the desire to know someone and pain portrayed through lyrics "you can take control of how my heart bleeds." When Apollo enters in the second verse — harmonized vocals and all — literally chef's kiss. If you want a dramatic '80s-esque song about forbidden desire to play as you drive down a dark road contemplating life, here you go.

"CHEMISTRY" BY GIGI PEREZ (FEB. 28)

Known best for her hit, "Sailor Song," indie folk artist Gigi Perez has taken the charts by storm within the last year. "Chemistry" is the latest of her works, detailing an intense love between her and another woman, a "secret life," combated by the expectations of family and society, where "some things we just don't talk about."

The release of this haunting, heart-wrenching tune is kicking off a tour starting in April in Europe and North America. She will then open for Hozier on his Unreal Unearth tour in June.

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Defense rules winner-take-all finale

No. 17 Baylor's comeback falls short against No. 10 TCU

FOSTER NICHOLAS
Sports Editor

For the first time in Big 12 history, the regular season title was on the line in a winner-take-all game on the final day of the regular season. Trailing by 10 with one minute to play, Baylor senior guard Yaya Felder scored five points.

Following two missed free throws, the 17th-ranked Bears were a 3-pointer away from forcing overtime and igniting a nearly sold-out Foster Pavilion crowd. Head coach Nicki Colleen entrusted Felder with the final shot with six seconds left.

On Senior Night, the guard tossed up a deep, contested triple that wedged between the rim and backboard before falling into No. 10 TCU's grasp. Unable to overcome their worst shooting night of the season at 27.7% from the floor, the Bears lost the top spot in the Big 12 and saw their nine-game winning streak snapped in a 51-48 loss to the 10th-ranked Horned Frogs on Sunday evening.

"We wanted to be cutting a net down," Colleen said. "We're not thinking about how many games in a row we've won; we're thinking about the game today and what it meant. And obviously, [it] meant the same thing to both teams. Neither one of us was picked to win this league."

Despite struggling offensively, Baylor (25-6, 15-3 Big 12) held TCU (28-3, 16-2 Big 12) to its second-lowest scoring game of the season, even without junior forward Darianna Littlepage-Buggs. The Horned Frogs shot 35.8% from the floor and missed five free throws, leaving the door open for the Bears to claw their way back.

"I thought both teams played good defense," Colleen said. "Their defensive game plan was really good against us. I mean, they executed it really, really well. Not everyone could do that because not everyone has a 6-foot-7 center."

Baskets were hard to come by early, as the teams were a combined 4-for-17 from the floor before the first media timeout. Graduate center Sedona Prince had all three TCU buckets, but through five minutes, the Bears had forced two turnovers, a charge and a shot clock violation. Prince finished with 16 points on 7-for-17 shooting and grabbed 19 rebounds — her second-best performance of the season.

"I hope we get another chance to prove that we can beat them because I know that we can," senior center Aaronette Vonleh said. "[There's] not much that we have to do differently. I think just making our shots. I think tonight was one of those nights where the basket wasn't really on our side, so we'll definitely be more prepared if we face them again."

The green and gold went without a field goal for 6:20 before junior

forward Bella Fontleroy slipped past Agnes Emma-Nnoku, breaking her ankles with a baseline drive and layup with 20 seconds left in the first quarter. Prince continued to dominate the paint, scoring 10 points and helping the Horned Frogs build a 12-7 lead by the end of the quarter.

Vonleh, who was held scoreless in the first quarter, drilled the first two field goals of the second, the latter being an and-1 layup with 5:13 on the clock to trim the lead to 17-15. It was the Bears' first bucket in nearly four minutes. Vonleh finished with 17 points and 10 rebounds — her fourth double-double of the season.

Felder took the reins from there. With 3:41 left in the half, she converted a contested layup, and 40 seconds later, she made another to even the game at 19-19. But just as Baylor was in striking range, the Horned Frogs responded with back-to-back threes in 36 seconds. The senior guard scored 17 points on 5-for-16 shooting with five rebounds.

Graduate guard Hailey Van Lith, who scored nine of her 14 points in the first half, sent TCU into the break with a step-back jumper at the buzzer, giving the Horned Frogs a 27-21 advantage.

Vonleh took over out of halftime, capitalizing on Prince's defensive presence as Baylor's guards struggled to attack the rim. She fueled an 8-2 run with three straight buckets.

After a missed free throw, Vonleh grabbed an offensive rebound. Failing to find an open teammate, she backed down Prince and spun an up-and-under layup off the glass to cut the deficit to 32-30 with 5:57 left in the third. The Foster Pavilion erupted, forcing a timeout less than a minute later.

"We learned a lot in this game,"

"I hope we get another chance to prove that we can beat them because I know that we can. [There's] not much that we have to do differently."

AARONETTE VONLEH | SENIOR CENTER

graduate guard Sarah Andrews said. "Next time the ball is not falling, we'll get a little more stops on defense. So I think it's a lot of learning lessons that we did in this game. But I think it's gonna make us even more hungry



Mary Thurmond | Photo Editor

LEAVIN' IT ON THE FLOOR Junior forward Bella Fontleroy fights for an offensive rebound during No. 17 Baylor women's basketball's 51-48 loss to No. 10 TCU on Sunday night at Foster Pavilion.

going into the tournament."

The timeout didn't slow Baylor's momentum. Felder sank two free throws to tie the game, and Vonleh's layup at the 3:46 mark gave the Bears their first lead since 3-2. The run extended to 13-2 over a 4 1/2-minute stretch.

The third quarter was the only one where Baylor shot above 30%, but its lead lasted just 1:08 before TCU answered. The Horned Frogs kept pace for the remainder of the quarter, taking a 38-36 lead into the final 10 minutes.

But just when the green and gold had edged their way back into the game, one of its worst shooting stretches of the season derailed any momentum.

The Bears endured a 1-for-15 slump for the first 8:55 of the fourth quarter as TCU built its first double-digit lead. The Horned Frogs drained three triples to stretch their advantage, while Baylor managed just a jumper and a free throw.

"We shot the ball pretty bad tonight, but I think we played a great game of defense," Andrews said. "We've still got more basketball left to play, so [we're focused on] just carrying our defense over, knowing that offense comes. We'll get in the gym and we'll put it all back together."

With 1:05 left in the game, Felder flew in to give the Bears one last push for a Big 12 regular season title. Within 20 seconds, she drilled a

jumper and a 3-pointer to cut the lead to 49-44 — more buckets than the team had in the last 11 1/2 minutes of game time.

After Felder's triple, the Horned Frogs called a timeout, but the ensuing possession came up empty as Vonleh came away with her only steal of the game. With a two-on-one going down the court, Felder lost her grasp of the ball near the free-throw line, and TCU came away with the ball.

Horned Frogs head coach Matt Campbell raced onto the floor, tugging the sleeve of an official to call a timeout. Due to the noise level of the Pavilion, Campbell was only handed a warning for being out of the coaching box and TCU jogged back to the bench to talk things over.

A heated Colleen ran to each official, screaming and asking why a technical hadn't been called — addressing them one after the other.

"They said it's loud in Foster, and they couldn't hear him," Colleen said. "So, you know, he did what he had to do to get a timeout."

From there, Baylor went to the foul plan, hacking senior guard Madison Conner on the inbound pass. Conner, an 86% free throw shooter, doinked the first and made the second as the scoreboard showed 50-44. The Bears called a timeout, and junior forward Bella Fontleroy whiffed on a 3-point attempt. Streaking from the corner, senior guard Jada Walker snagged an offensive rebound and tossed a layup over her head backward to make it a 50-46 game.

Nineteen seconds on the clock.

After another timeout, the Horned Frogs couldn't get the ball in the net within five seconds. Turnover. Baylor's ball. Six seconds later, Vonleh threw up a layup to pull the game within two.

Thirteen seconds on the clock.

Out of timeouts, TCU hurried to inbound the ball, and Fontleroy fouled out of the game while diving for a steal. Nine seconds left. Van Lith hit one of two free throws at the line, and Colleen used her final timeout to draw up one last play.

Felder took the ball at midcourt and pulled up from long range. The Foster Pavilion went silent, then the ball wedged between the rim and backboard, falling into TCU's grasp. Again, the Horned Frogs missed the first free throw.

"Yaya just loves the hoop, she's a hooper," Colleen said. "[She's] an emotional kid. It's her strength and her Achilles heel. She wants to do well... That kid just cares a lot."

Soon after, the candles rolled off the rim, and a full-court heave by Andrews fell short. From a once commanding position, the Horned Frogs picked up their first ever league title by millimeters.

"Yeah, of course [we want to play TCU in the Big 12 tournament]," Colleen said. "I'm a competitor. Our kids are competitors, and they've proved that. They've proved that all year long, and in particular down the stretch."

The Bears return to action as the No. 2 seed in the 2025 Phillips 66 Big 12 Championship quarterfinals at 5:30 p.m. Friday at T-Mobile Center in Kansas City, Mo.

Baylor men's basketball seeking rivalry revenge against TCU



Brady Harris | Photographer

POWER IN THE POST Fifth-year guard forward Norchad Omier goes up for a layup during Baylor men's basketball's 71-61 win over Oklahoma State on Saturday night at Foster Pavilion.

JACKSON POSEY
Sports Writer

After years of dominance, Baylor men's basketball is looking to avoid losing a season sweep to TCU for the first time since 2017-18.

The Bears entered that season on an 11-game winning streak in the series. In the eight years since, they're 7-7, including an 0-2 mark at the Foster Pavilion.

"I thought down the stretch, they were playing free and we were playing not to lose," Baylor head coach Scott Drew said after the teams' first matchup this season, a 74-71 Horned Frog victory in Waco. "These are games where when you can separate, you've got to separate, and if you don't, this is what happens."

It took an overtime victory over West Virginia for Baylor to avoid a five-game losing streak after losing starting center Josh Ojianwuna to a season-ending knee injury. The Bears have struggled in his absence, though they may have found a solution in an aggressive, offensive rebound-centric approach.

Head coach Scott Drew said that offensive rebounding has "most definitely" been an increased point of emphasis since Ojianwuna went down. It shows. The Bears outworked Oklahoma State on the offensive glass, 11-6, in their first regulation win since the injury.

Getting to the line has also found deeper importance for a team newly reliant on putting opposing big men in foul trouble. That strategy, though, has proven much more effective at Foster Pavilion. In six games since the injury, Baylor is shooting 27 free throws per game at

home compared to 12.7 per game on the road.

TCU, meanwhile, has lost two of three following their hottest stretch of the season. Similarly to the Bears, the Horned Frogs bounced back Saturday with a win over a bottom-four Big 12 team (UCF) after a series of disappointing losses on the road against Cincinnati and West Virginia.

In TCU's case, though, those two losses came by a combined 30 points. Most critically, the Horned Frogs struggle shooting: the team is shooting 25% from beyond the arc in 12 games since beating Baylor on Jan. 19.

The Horned Frogs are the No. 81 scoring defense in the nation — certainly above average, but not enough to compensate for a 316th-ranked offense, which manages just 68.3 points per game. That's second-worst in the Big 12, 0.1 points ahead of last-place West Virginia.

But Jamie Dixon's team hangs its hat on defense and does so with the best of 'em. KenPom has TCU pegged as the No. 32 defense in the country, boosted by the contributions of junior center Ernest Udeh Jr, a Kansas transfer averaging 2.7 "stocks" (steals + blocks) per game.

The Bears are favored to win — they have a 65.8% chance, per ESPN — but they'll have to score more efficiently to have a chance in Schollmaier Arena.

"Like every team in the Big 12, they're better at home than they are on the road," Drew said. "So, we got our work cut out for us."

Tipoff is scheduled for 7 p.m. Tuesday at Schollmaier Arena in Fort Worth.

Sports

Baylor Baseball drops final leg of Globe Life series

JACKSON POSEY
Sports Writer

Baylor baseball dropped the final game of a three-game series at Globe Life Field, falling 7-4 to No. 25 Auburn on Sunday afternoon. The Tigers rode a dominant start from pitcher Christian Chatterton, who allowed just one run and struck out nine over five innings.

The Bears (8-3) went 1-2 during the Amegy Bank College Baseball Series this weekend, splitting games against No. 8 Oregon State (4-3 loss on Friday) and Ohio State (8-6 win on Saturday). Their strong start this season marks a stark turnaround from last year's team, which opened 4-11.

"It means a lot," said redshirt senior outfielder Enzo Apodaca, who went 1-for-4 with a home run. "We had good momentum coming into this weekend and we were able to pick up one game yesterday. We're just trying to flush these last two games that we've played, these last two losses, and move onto the next week."

Starting pitcher Cole Stasio's 1-2-3 opening inning was stalled by an official review. Auburn catcher Ike Irish smacked a grounder through the right side of the infield, but his ill-fated attempt to advance to second was confirmed on replay.

When Baylor leadoff hitter Jack Little stepped up to the plate, he left no doubt. The Wichita State transfer started the game with a bang, crushing Chatterton's first pitch into the second deck in left field for his second home run in as many days.

"I love a leadoff home run; we'll take it every time," head coach Mitch Thompson said. "But you know it's a long ballgame, so from there it's just keep playing."

Auburn responded quickly. Cooper McMurray slapped a ground ball past Baylor third baseman Hunter Teplanszky, followed by a single to right field from Bub Terrell. With two outs, the Bears had a chance to escape.

Then came the runs.

Chase Fralick drove the ball up the middle to score McMurray. Bristol Carter likewise knocked in Terrell. When Eric Snow became the third consecutive batter to knock the ball up the middle — this time, high and into the glove of center fielder Ty Johnson — it felt like a fitting end to a trilogy.

Stasio, who'd given up three earned runs on six hits and two walks with one strikeout, was pulled one out and two strikes into the third inning. He was replaced by redshirt sophomore southpaw Caleb Jameson, who walked Terrell on two pitches, loading the bases.

Jameson hit Chris Rembert, allowing an inherited runner to score, but averted disaster by inducing a pair of infield pop-ups. The Paris, Texas native allowed one earned run over 2 1/3 innings of work, striking out one and walking one the rest of the way.

Meanwhile, Chatterton was tossing a masterclass for Auburn. After surrendering Little's leadoff homer, he didn't allow another extra-base hit and struck out the side twice, finishing his outing with nine strikeouts and two walks in five innings.

The Bears attempted a rally in the seventh inning but couldn't capitalize. With freshman second baseman Pearson Riebock and sophomore catcher JJ Kennett in scoring position, senior shortstop Tyriq Kemp grounded out to short, ending the threat.

Auburn padded its lead in the eighth with help from Baylor's defensive missteps. A failed glove-hand toss and miscommunication on a slow-rolling grounder resulted in a pair of infield hits. A 4-6-3 double play nearly salvaged the inning, but Cade Belyeu laced a two-run homer inside the right-field foul pole to extend the Tigers' lead.

Apodaca joined the party minutes later, launching a 389-footer past the outstretched arm of Terrell into the bullpen. Senior left fielder Wesley Jordan was mere inches away from an encore, but a leaping Carter knocked it out of the air before it cleared the fence. Jordan rounded second with too much momentum and slid past third base, giving the cutoff man just

enough time to send him packing.

The Bears put two more runners on base, but Riebock's deep fly ball landed squarely in Belyeu's glove to end the inning.

A final attempted comeback run commenced immediately in the bottom of the ninth. Kennett reached on a fielding error, then advanced to third on a double by Kemp. Apodaca launched a sacrifice fly to send the sophomore catcher home. But Jordan grounded out to third,

drawing the curtains at 7-4.

"One thing we're learning is we got a bunch of fighters," Thompson said. "We've got a bunch of guys that are going to compete ... Today we hurt ourselves a little bit there, but our intent, our effort, our execution's been really good."

Baylor will return to action against Tarleton State at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday at the Baylor Ballpark. Fans will be able to stream the game live on ESPN+.



Wesley Jordan (33)
Kassidy Tsikitas | Photo Editor



Kassidy Tsikitas | Photo Editor

SLIDING TO SUCCESS Senior shortstop Tyriq Kemp slides into home during Baylor baseball's 4-3 loss to No. 8 Oregon State in the first game of the Amegy Bank College Baseball Series Friday night at Globe Life Field.



One thing we're learning is we got a bunch of fighters. We've got a bunch of guys that are going to compete... Today we hurt ourselves a little bit there, but our intent, our effort, our execution's been really good.

MITCH THOMPSON | HEAD COACH

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BAYLOR LARIAT
News for the students by the students

AI OPTIMISM from A1

cryptocurrency scandal when the Hawk Tuah coin collapsed the day of its launch on the Solana blockchain, Baker assured his audience that cryptocurrency was a safe investment.

“People often think that crypto people just want this chaotic Wild West of a world forever and always,” Baker said. “That’s actually not true. You take the temperature of the crypto space and they just want to know how they can build what they want to build and do it legally.”

After discussing the benefits of cryptocurrency investment, such as a fully liquid portfolio, decentralized currency and collective ownership of blockchain platforms, Baker quoted Marc Andreessen’s famous Techno-Optimist Manifesto.

“My favorite line of the entire piece was he said, ‘A techno optimist holds the belief that every next problem is solvable,’” Baker said. “So you innovate, you create, you push the frontier, you go to the edge. Problems pop up. Let’s keep going and keep working on it.”

“
They just want to know how they can build what they want to build and do it legally.”

DEVIN BAKER | CRYPTOCURRENCY FUND OWNER

NEW TOOL from A1

research tools are considered useful by some, others have reservations about using the technology. Peter McDonald, a doctoral candidate in the political science department, said that he has concerns about tools like Scopus AI’s accuracy.

“I don’t use it personally,” McDonald said. “The reason I don’t use it: I don’t fully trust they’ve gone to the point where they can make accurate descriptions [and] accurate analysis of the material. I think there are a lot of people who are worried about that.”

While acknowledging his skepticism of the AI tool, McDonald also said there are potential benefits.

“I think AI could really help the drudgery of that, give good summaries and things like that,” McDonald said. “I think it could potentially help with composition of things like literature reviews, once it gets good enough.”

Peterson-Lugo encourages students and faculty to use the resources the library provides, like Scopus AI. Peterson-Lugo said she believes it offers a chance for better research and enhanced grasp on topics. She noted that it’s all very new technology that will only continue to get better.



Mesha Mittanasala | Photographer
AI POWERS RESEARCH Students and faculty have access to the Scopus research database, which has added the Scopus AI tool. It utilizes AI to pull resources and information from across the database.

R1 RENEWED from A1

professors in this department that are primarily sociologists of religion, which is pretty much unheard of anywhere else,” he said. “We’ve really focused on, in addition to religion, the sociology of health which was a big push from the university over the last decade.”

Fischbacher said that the R1 designation has helped contribute to research over his three years at the university.

“I did an unaccredited research project last summer, so that was made possible by funding through the Baylor math department,” he said. “I’m sure being R1 and trying to get good research results was a factor of that.”

According to Fischbacher, this prestige also appeals to prospective students.

“I think we have more and more high-quality research graduate students coming, so we started collaborating with those,” he said.

Uecker explained that the

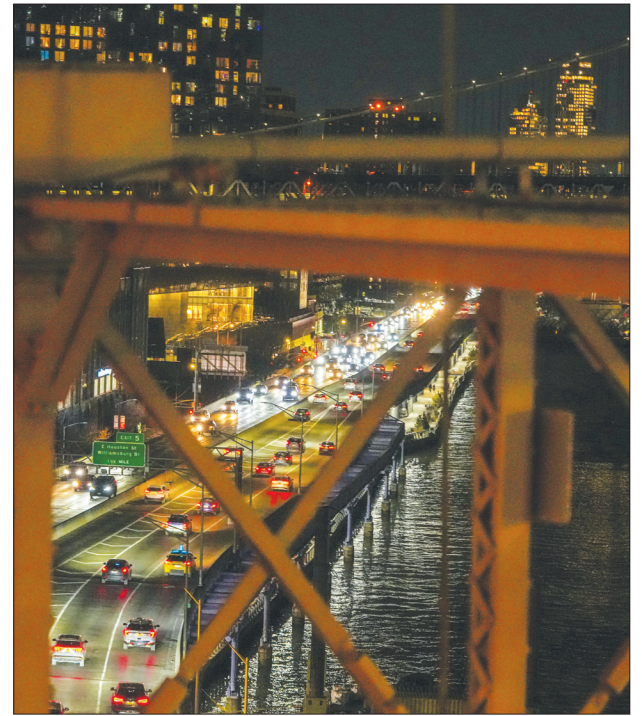
development of additional faculty resources over the past five years represented the university’s increased commitment to research.

“The Office of the Vice Provost of Research has really expanded,” he said. “There’s a lot more support for getting your research grant proposals together and for administering those grants after you’ve gotten them. That infrastructure has really developed in the last five years or so.”

Uecker said that in many ways, the university’s prior research suggested its worthiness of R1 status before receiving the official title. Projects such as the quadrennial Baylor Religion Survey, which he said contributed to several publications, were evidence of Baylor’s upward trajectory in the academic world.

“Even when I started here, the sociology department was an R1 department, even though the university hadn’t attained that level yet because they’ve always supported research initiatives,” Uecker said.

GREETINGS FROM NYC



Mary Thurmond | Photo Editor

CONCRETE JUNGLE Editors and reporters from The Lariat attended the College Media Association Pro-Con in New York last week, hearing from professional journalists about the state of the industry in an AI-generated, social media-driven world.

Words in
BLOOM

Beall Poetry Festival 2025
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POETRY READINGS BY:
Victoria Chang | Carl Phillips | Christian Wiman

