

Sing BAYLOR LARIAT

News for the students by the students

Friday, February 20, 2026

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SPORTS | D4

BASEBALL:

Tyce Armstrong reflects on path to Baylor after HR history



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SING COSTUMES:

What outfits stand out as the most memorable this past decade?

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OVATION OR DIVIDE:

The duality of Sing is what makes the experience everything it's supposed to be



Jake Schroeder | Photographer
Mesha Mittanasala | Photographer



FRONT PAGE NEWS The Lariat covered the first annual All-University Sing, announcing it April 24, 1953.

Lariat's Sing coverage throughout the years

MACKENZIE GRIZZARD
Assistant News Editor

Nearly 75 years ago, Baylor's All-University Sing had little the pomp and circumstance it does today. On a rainy spring night in April 1953, a meager 13 souls gathered into Waco Hall to watch just eight groups perform after the weather had relocated them from their original location at the SUB Bowl.

There, amongst rows and rows of empty seats, a handful of Lariat staffers who set pen to paper had no idea they were covering the start of one of Baylor's most iconic traditions.

Since then, generations of Lariaters have covered Sing alongside Waco news outlets, looking for new and

innovative ways to describe this yearly tradition.

Ryan Brinson, former Roundup editor and Sing Alliance chair from 2009-2010, said student media entities worked in tandem, and the Baylor community often looked to The Lariat for coverage of the event before the age of social media.

"The Lariat would go to cover Club Night, and when the edition would come out the next day, people would flock to read it," Brinson said.

In the spring of 1969, The Lariat covered a Sing conflict of "High School Musical" proportions. The 16th annual All-University Sing was scheduled for March 1, 1969, the same day as the Baylor vs. TCU basketball game. At the time, Baylor was

led with both TCU and the University of Texas for the lead in the Southwest Conference, and Baylor's then-assistant director of the student union, Mrs. L.H. York, told The Lariat it wouldn't be possible to reschedule Sing.

"There's no way to switch Sing," York told The Lariat. "Three of the judges don't come until Saturday afternoon."

Almost two decades later, another Sing controversy would arise, giving The Lariat yet another chance to switch up its traditional Sing coverage.

In the fall of 1986, Baylor announced official Sing rules would undergo several changes for the upcoming 1987 performance. Several of the rules we know Sing

SING HISTORY >> C4

Unsung Heroes

Waco Hall staff wait in the wings of Sing

ASHLYN BECK
News Editor

As All-University Sing participants deliver performances with their usual flair, Waco Hall student staff members wait in the wings with one objective — throw focus to the performers.

Sorority, fraternity and Sing Alliance members put in the work for months to prepare for the anticipated event, but guidelines only allow them to practice 12 hours a week. While they pore over choreography, vocals, costumes and backdrops, Waco Hall staff do work of a different kind: running tech rehearsals, manning the ticket office, organizing props and more.

Spring senior Jillian Herman is the Sing stage manager, and for the past three weeks, her evenings have consisted of hours-long lighting rehearsals, tech rehearsals and dress rehearsals. Herman said her work for Sing started before any performers even set foot on the stage.

"We get started before rehearsals even start," Herman said.

Herman's work for Waco Hall caps at 20 hours a week, but that doesn't include the work she does outside the building. Herman has spent the last few weeks perfecting lighting cues, audio cues and props during rehearsals.

"Before rehearsals even start, we get a binder full of all of their sheet music and then rehearsals start, and we do lighting techs," Herman said.

On her own time, she has extensively studied the sheet music for the nine acts she manages and practiced giving cues. Though she only attends rehearsals in

Waco Hall 20 hours a week, Herman said all of her work and practicing add up to 25 to 30 hours a week.

While acts perform on stage, Brazoria senior Isabella Davis sits in the rafters — literally. Davis is a stage crew member, and her job has been jovially nicknamed "rail dog." Her responsibilities include manually lowering and raising any hanging props used in acts. Most of the time, flying and hanging props only come in and out at the beginning or the end of an act. For the rest of each act, Davis has spent time learning its choreography. Once Davis sufficiently mastered the choreography of each of her nine Sing acts, she was dubbed not just a rail student manager, but a "rail dog."

"We spend, like, I don't know, 10 to 20 hours a week with these people, and when we are looking at their acts, it's for an hour at a time," Davis said. "During that, you get bored ... so you just learn the dances with the groups."

In general, the stage crew arrives at Waco Hall 30 minutes before rehearsal starts and stays for about 30 minutes after. Once Sing opens, though, all bets are off. Herman said it's normal for the Waco Hall staff and stage crew to stay for about 45 minutes after the show ends to clean and prepare for the following day. On closing night, though, the staff stays hours past the finale. Last year, Herman finally left Waco Hall at 2:30 a.m. on closing night.

While the stagehands and managers work behind the scenes, Plano junior Oliver Dillard mans the Waco Hall

UNsung HEROES >> C4



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EDITORIAL



James Ellis | Cartoonist

Sing: Standing ovation or standing divide?

The season of Sing is upon us, and its frantic temperament is felt through all corners of campus. Sorority girls walk past in comically long coats to protect their costume identity, students are good at keeping secrets for once and it seems the campus is holding its breath in anticipation.

Sing has been one of Baylor's most beloved traditions since the 1950s, despite the very first show having only eight acts in Waco Hall. Today, All-University Sing represents a Baylor super-event, bringing in parents, alumni and guests from all over to pack the seats of Waco Hall.

But the bright white stage lights often don't shine on some of the other aspects of Sing — the non-shiny, exclusionary exhaustion that comes both before and after acts take their final bows.

While Sing brings our campus

together, it also functions as a controversial topic that riles people up if you bring it up at the right time. It is a dichotomous battle of tradition and profiteering.

For some, Sing represents all the joy of being a part of a university as old as Baylor. The whimsical themes, costumes and music choices give people an excuse to appreciate the arts without ever leaving campus. Without Sing, we wouldn't have the chance to giggle at our fraternity friends jazz-slide across the stage or be brought to tears by our sorority sisters' angelic voices.

Sing brings us together in a world that is obsessed with division. It doesn't matter if you agree with your friend's controversial opinions when it's Sing season — because something about silly costumes and extravagant acts brings us together like nothing could. When Waco winters bore

nothing but gray, Sing is a flash of color that gets us excited for all that is to come.

But on the other hand, Sing represents the PR-driven missions of campuses around the country, yet another imperceptible tug on the wallets yanked open every semester anyway. In the early days of Sing, tickets were free — come one, come all. There was no need to go into debt to watch your classmates sing and dance on behalf of their organizations.

And yet, as the years went on and acts became more and more extravagant, winning acts needed elaborate sets, one-of-a-kind costumes and choreographed routines. When Sing acts began to emulate Broadway productions, ticket prices followed suit.

But for lack of a better phrase, the show must go on. The expressive

smiles of dolled-up sorority girls don't reflect the utter exhaustion of three-hour practices, multiple times a week for months leading up to the curtain. When Blair Browning gets on stage and regales us with stories of his children, we don't see Waco Hall staff and Student Production members scrambling backstage to put the show on.

There's so much that goes into Sing that we don't see, let alone appreciate.

And that's the dichotomy, whether our tireless performers truly sing their hearts out because they love Baylor, or if we are all embroiled in yet another jazzed-up swindle.

Two things can be true at once. You can love Sing because of its exciting production and fabulous dance numbers and criticize it for its shortcomings. If you didn't get tickets this year, for whatever reason, that's OK. You aren't any less green and gold

for missing the Greeks shake and belt one out.

You also don't have to go to Sing just because of its renown. You can still show your love for Baylor and its traditions in a host of other ways.

As Sing season reaches its peak this weekend and next, show some love to your classmates. Your friends in Sing are juggling the same responsibilities you are, on top of a Broadway-level production. Even more so, we encourage you to recognize the unsung heroes of Sing — Waco Hall staff and Student Productions.

While the bright stage lights might be more blinding during Sing than at any other time, Baylor shines bright through all its traditions and, most importantly, its people. Baylor wouldn't be Baylor without the individuals who love it, and Sing wouldn't be Sing without the passions of those who love our school.

The price of tradition: Who Sing leaves behind

SAVANNAH FORD
LTVN Social Media Editor

At Baylor, there are certain traditions you're told will define your college experience before you even understand them. Line Camp, homecoming, Christmas on 5th and, perhaps most famously, Sing.

Baylor Sing is one of those traditions everyone promises you'll never forget. Seven minutes of perfectly timed harmonies, costume changes and choreography — the kind of performance that makes you proud to be part of Baylor. From the audience, it looks effortless, joyful and inclusive.

But behind the curtain, Sing comes with a price, not just in money, but in access. And for the students who can't participate or can't secure a ticket in time, Sing doesn't feel like a celebration, but like something happening

without them.

When I transferred to Baylor, I didn't know what Sing or Pigskin was. Honestly, I thought people were exaggerating when they talked about them like they were life-changing events. I came from a community college where traditions meant free pizza during finals week and maybe a themed day if people showed up. So when everyone started talking about rehearsals, costumes and ticket sales, I assumed it was just another campus show.

Then I attended a dress rehearsal. Sororities, fraternities and other student organizations ran through their performances, moving across the stage, shouting lines in unison, spinning through choreography with the music. I was immediately impressed; the talent and dedication were undeniable.

But I also noticed something else: almost everyone on that stage belonged to the same circles. The groups performing were overwhelmingly Greek organizations, and the energy backstage was reserved for those "in the know."

Over the decades, Sing has grown in spectacle choreography, handheld microphones, themed acts, ticketed shows, all creating the massive cultural event we see today. It's beautiful, awe-inspiring and it's mostly inaccessible.

Because while everyone talks about "Sing season" and the excitement surrounding it, that thrill isn't universal. Students who aren't in Greek life, who don't have the connections or inside knowledge often watch from the sidelines, sometimes literally. Tickets sell out before many even know they exist, and with few exceptions, non-Greek students don't get a chance to rehearse, perform or even feel like part of the tradition. Sing becomes a celebration for some and a reminder of exclusion for others.

I can't forget the feeling of standing in the rehearsal crowd, clapping along, cheering quietly for the friends I knew on stage and realizing how many students weren't represented there. Not because they lacked talent, but because access to the tradition is filtered through social structures, organizations, finances and insider knowledge.

The broader Baylor student body doesn't always have a doorway in to Sing. And that matters. Traditions are meant to unite communities, yet here is one of the university's most celebrated events, and it doesn't fully include the people it claims to celebrate.

I don't want to take anything away from Sing. I cheer for it as loudly as anyone. I admire the hours of work, the creativity and the energy. But attending that rehearsal as a transfer student gave me perspective. For all its beauty, Sing can also highlight who belongs and who doesn't. And as Baylor continues to grow, it's worth asking, how can one of the university's most cherished traditions feel like home to more than just a few select groups?

So maybe the question isn't whether Sing should change, but whether the experience around it can grow. If Baylor traditions are meant to welcome us into the same story, then the next chapter should be written with more voices in it. Pride feels stronger when it's shared, and traditions last longer when more people feel they belong in them.



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Sing! 2026



BETA THETA PI / KAPPA CHI ALPHA

HOLLYWOOD BREAKDOWN Beta and KXA work together to bring the City of Angels to the stage of Waco Hall, full of Old Hollywood-style themes.



DELTA DELTA DELTA

WHEN A MOUSE EATS A COOKIE Delta Delta Delta's delicious act, inspired by the children's book "If You Give A Mouse a Cookie," centers around themes of friendships and color.



PHI KAPPA CHI

COLD AS ICE! Phi Chi returns to the stage as snowmen for Sing 2026.



ALPHA CHI OMEGA

CATCH HER IF YOU CAN Alpha Chi Omega brings a cross-continental jewel heist to the stage.



KAPPA ALPHA THETA

LONDON'S CALLING Kappa Alpha Theta crosses the Atlantic in their London-themed Sing act.



BETA UPSILON PI

GRILL OF RIGHTS Protesting their local homeowners association, BYX's Sing act shows off denim shorts and rock classics.

ALPHA PHI



NO STRINGS ATTACHED Alpha Phi rocks out on stage to disco classics, all while decked out in sparkly, frilled and polka dot outfits.



ALPHA TAU OMEGA / CHI OMEGA

CAREFUL WHAT YOU WITCH FOR Alpha Tau Omega and Chi Omega team up for their musical rendition of the classic fairy tale "Hansel and Gretel."



SIGMA ALPHA EPSILON

BEAR-LY MADE IT In a thrilling campfire tale, SAE narrowly avoids the dangers of nature.



KAPPA SIGMA

SO FRESH, SO CLEAN Kappa Sigma works to keep the streets clean and the crowd entertained.



KAPPA KAPPA GAMMA

TOGETHER WE CAN Echoing the iconic symbol "Rosie the Riveter," Kappa Kappa Gamma paints a picture of patriotism.

DELTA TAU DELTA



MODEL CITIZENS Delta Tau Delta shows off a rebellious streak for Sing 2026.



ALPHA DELTA PI

FLIGHT 1851 Alpha Delta Pi recreates "Lord of the Flies," taking the audience through the trials and tribulations of aviation.



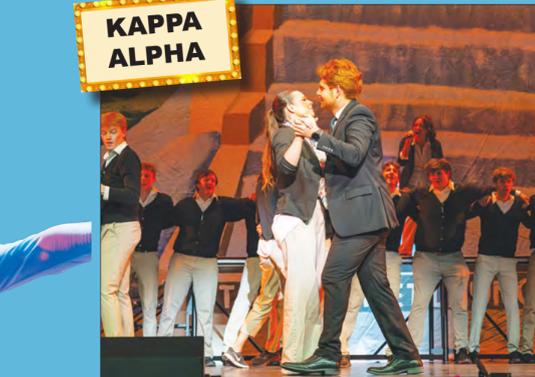
ZETA TAU ALPHA / SIGMA CHI

THE LOVE SHOW Zeta and Sigma Chi's love-themed game show keeps hearts beating fast throughout the performance.



PI BETA PHI

OUT OF THE BOX The dolls of Pi Phi have entered the workshop, working to fix one of their own.



KAPPA ALPHA

BAYLOR'S FIRST DANCE Kappa Alpha calls back to Baylor finally allowing dancing on campus in the 1990s, echoing a "Footloose" inspired theme.



KAPPA OMEGA TAU

BANKERS PARADISE KOT brings a banker fantasy to life, decked out in sparkly gold suits and matching top hats.



Lariat file photo

THIS IS HOW WE DOUGH IT Kappa Omega Tau won in 2024 with its act "Sweet Gingerbread Men." KOT has placed in six of the last 10 years Sing.



Sam Gassaway | Photo Editor

ALL ABOARD Chi Omega won All-University Sing last spring with its act "Back on Track," and performed in Pigskin Revue on Oct. 29.

Greek organizations continue to dominate Sing – why?

JOANA KAROSHI
Staff Writer

This year marks the 72nd annual All-University Sing at Baylor, a long-standing campus tradition that draws between 2,000 and 3,000 attendees. Although the competition is technically open to a wide range of student organizations, participation has historically been dominated by Greek life, with only one non-Greek organization competing most years.

Over the past decade, placement trends have remained consistent. Kappa Omega Tau has earned six placements in the last 10 years, followed by five from Chi Omega and four from Pi Beta Phi. The sustained success of a small group of Greek organizations raises questions about what contributes to repeated competitive dominance in an event branded as "all-university."

Leaders from historically winning and successful organizations point to culture and internal commitment as key factors behind sustained placements.

Prosper senior David Van Dyke is the Sing chair for KOT and said

preparation for the production begins months in advance, with brainstorming starting as early as the summer.

"We've been planning this for like half a year now," Van Dyke said. "We start with a blank slate every year."

Members rehearse approximately 10 hours per week during peak preparation, Van Dyke said. While participation is not mandatory, he said turnout remains high because of the organization's culture.

"We care more about the effort that they put in and the energy that they bring," he said. "We get so many people showing up every single year."

Costuming and production are also internally managed. Van Dyke said choreography and costume design are handled internally, without outside consultants or hired professionals.

"It's all done by us," he said.

He also noted that Baylor sets spending guidelines, including a cap of roughly \$130 per costume.

When asked why Greek organizations tend to dominate placements, Van Dyke pointed

to membership size and attendance expectations.

"I know a lot of other Greek organizations require their members to be at practices," he said. "There are a ton of people in these organizations and a lot of history. I think all those factors go into maybe more people showing up and caring."

Van Dyke attributed his organization's repeated placements to internal standards and tradition.

"We hold ourselves to the same standard every year," Van Dyke said. "Just giving it our all every single year and going 100% at all times."

For Sing Alliance, the university's primary non-Greek participant, preparation follows a different structure.

Abilene senior Trevor Cox, Sing Alliance's administration chair and president, said planning begins immediately after closing night each year.

"We announce the new chairs' closing night," he said. "If they wanted to, that night they could start talking about themes."

Unlike some Greek organizations, which rehearse up to 10 hours per week, Sing Alliance members

rehearse between five and nine hours, depending on their role in the production.

"If you are part-time, you rehearse for five hours," he said. "If you are full-time ... you rehearse nine."

While all organizations operate under the same spending caps set by the university, funding sources differ.

Sing Alliance members pay individual dues to fund costumes, backdrops and production materials.

When it comes to structural advantages, Cox said Greek organizations have an advantage.

"I would right off the bat say yes," Cox said.

He pointed to earlier chair selection, built-in membership bases and audience size as potential factors.

"When you have a 400-girl sorority cheering on an act, it just makes it look better, and it makes it sound better to the judges," he said.

Trevor emphasized that the scale of production is what makes participation meaningful for members.

"Sing can't happen with a one-man show," he said, noting that bringing together more than 100 students

requires collective commitment.

In an email to The Lariat, Associate Director for Student Activities Sarah Patterson said Sing's judging and budgeting processes are structured to ensure consistency across participating organizations.

Patterson said 12 to 16 judges evaluate performances across categories, including musical quality, choreography, creativity, theme development and entertainment value.

She said all participating acts are capped at 14 rehearsal hours per week and may spend up to \$3,500 on stage sets and \$130 per costume. Budgets must be submitted and audited by the Student Productions committee.

Patterson added that participation is open to all student organizations, with registration accepted in the order of submission, up to 20 acts per year.

While university officials emphasize that participation and budgeting guidelines are standardized across all organizations, the results over the past decade suggest that scale, institutional memory and built-in membership may continue to shape outcomes.

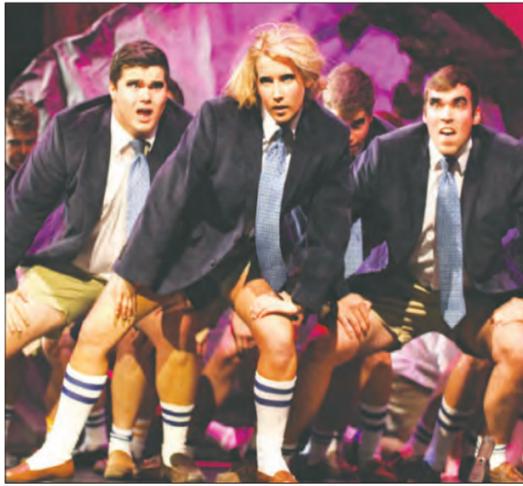
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Lariat file photo
PJ PARTY Kappa Delta performed a sleepover-themed Sing act "Lights Out" on Feb. 26, 1988.



Lariat file photo
SURVIVAL Alpha Tau Omega performed "Into the Darkness," pairing "Lord of the Flies" with Kanye West riffs in 2015 Sing.



Jake Schroeder | Photographer
HEART EYES Zeta Tau Alpha and Sigma Chi pair for Sing 2026 in their act, "The Love Show."

LET THE CURTAIN RISE

A look at the tradition that keeps Baylor Sing-ing

RHEA CHOUDHARY
Staff Writer

In 1953, eight of Baylor's male social clubs hosted a small-scale singing competition in Waco Hall to 13 viewers and titled the performance All-University Sing. Even now Baylor celebrates the same event as elaborate, Broadway-style productions.

Modern Sing acts display custom-built sets, exquisite costumes, lighting design, live vocals and synchronized choreography, all conceptualized and produced by students.

Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, Sing became a staple part of Baylor's campus culture. Performances became more thematic, and production values increased as organizations began competing not just vocally but visually as well.

By the 1980s and 1990s, Sing's transformation became a fully staged theatrical event to look forward to. Student groups began to prepare months in advance for their acts, often starting rehearsals

early during the fall semester for February performances.

According to the University Archives, the materials preserved include early programs and scripts, photographs documenting set progress, scrapbooks created by Sing participants, costume sketches, design plans, records detailing rule changes and the criteria used to judge each performance.

Baylor Archivist Dr. Elizabeth Rivera emphasized the importance of returning to the archives to understand how traditions such as Sing evolve and change over time.

"When you really want to know the story, you always need to come back to the archive because you need to understand the past and where you have been to see where they currently are and where they need to grow or go in the future," Rivera said.

Rivera's emphasis on understanding the university archives reflects, in a broader context, Baylor's philosophy that traditions do not

remain static. Instead, they are moved forward by each class, decade by decade, year by year.

Describing Baylor's traditions as layered, Rivera correlated the university's annual events with "dovetailed furniture," in which generations of students are connected through shared experiences and material culture. The university's stored scrapbooks and photographs illustrate how much students invest in their Baylor pride, whether it is through the pasted pennants on their dorm walls or their Sing costumes shining bright on the Waco Hall stage each spring.

Sing largely correlates to this framework. It is reflective of a few of Baylor's core values, including student collaboration, artistic excellence, community identity and multi-generational continuity.

With traditions such as Diadeloso or Christmas on Fifth Street, Sing focuses on the student experience, giving students the opportunity to excel outside the classroom and be

part of something lasting.

For many freshmen who are about to experience Sing, the tradition is something they have heard many exciting things about before even enrolling, including Southlake freshman Grace Kuruvilla.

"Even while touring Baylor, Sing was a very big part that was talked about on the tour," Kuruvilla said. "I'm excited to see what all the sororities come together to put on in the show, and I've always loved watching productions."

Kuruvilla's anticipation for the upcoming weekend full of Sing shows how exciting the event is not just as a performance for an audience to view, but as a visible motif of Baylor's culture, being one that prospective students hear about on tours, current students put months of work into and alumni end up remembering long after graduation.

Rivera also described that what institutions choose to continue is representative of what they value.

"Sometimes what you do regularly shapes and forms who you are and who you're becoming more than anything else," Rivera said. "It is not just the big events in life that matter."

Sing's annual return each February makes its significance that much stronger. It is not revived just for milestone anniversaries; rather, it is sustained and produced year after year.

Throughout the years, Sing has shifted from a social club vocal competition in 1953 to a high-level production design with professional lighting and sound, multi-month rehearsals, and performances at Waco Hall.

While every act feels brand new every year, Sing stands on decades of choreography notes, costume sketches, rehearsal photos and late-night practices that came before it.

Sing is not simply a show. It is a living archive, time capsule and collection, rebuilt every February by the next class of Baylor Bears.



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From pigs to pizza: Best Sing costumes from past 5 years

STACIE BOYLS
Arts & Life Writer

All-University Sing is a spectacle built on visuals as much as it is on vocals and choreography. While set pieces and lighting establish atmosphere, costumes often serve as the clearest bridge between concept and character.

The strongest Sing costumes don't just look good — they clarify plot, establish tone and create memorable moments that linger long after the curtain closes.

From whimsical lobsters to detailed scarecrows, the past five years have produced standout designs that demonstrate just how central costuming is to Sing's storytelling.

“When Pigs Fly” (2025)

Delta Delta Delta delivered one of the most cohesive visual concepts in recent years with its satin pink-pig-themed show, anchored by charming, practical costume design and show attire.

Performers wore cute pink



dresses paired with pig-themed accessories, including pig ears that established character

while reinforcing the show's playful premise.

The costumes succeeded in balancing creativity and function. The simple dress silhouettes allowed for full movement, while the pig-themed accessories carried the thematic weight.

The result was a look that felt both imaginative and intentional, fully aligned with the show's nostalgic and whimsical tone.

Three organizations stood out in 2024 for their ability to use costume changes and distinct character looks to actively support narrative development.

“Panic at the Disco!” (2024)

Zeta Tau Alpha embraced the theatrical roots of its musical inspiration through a range of dynamic costume choices, including disco-inspired outfits and police uniforms.

The contrast between styles allowed performers to shift seamlessly between narrative moments, using costume transitions to signal character changes and plot progression.

“Caught Red-Handed” (2024)

Chi Omega reimagined the world of “Little Red Riding Hood” with fashionable, clearly defined characters. Costumes included stylized Little Red Riding Hood looks, wolves and grandmothers, each designed with modern flair while remaining instantly recognizable.

The clarity of these designs



helped encapsulate the story,

ensuring audiences could easily follow the narrative while appreciating the visual creativity.

“Papa Tiki’s, Balliamo!” (2024)

Tau Kappa Epsilon built its show around the familiar setting of a New York-style pizza shop, using costumes to create a believable and immersive environment for Sing.

Performers wore aprons and attire inspired by classic slice shop culture, reinforcing the

setting while contributing to the show's humor and personality. The everyday familiarity of the costumes grounded the story, making the creative twists the focus of the performance.

“I-30Pi” (2023)

Alpha Delta Pi's construction-themed show demonstrated how uniformity and individuality can coexist in effective costume design. Performers wore construction outfits that established a clear group identity, while playful additions, most notably the oversized cone costume

cameo, added humor and visual surprise. These moments of contrast allowed the costumes to enhance both the show's structure and its personality, creating memorable visual highlights without disrupting

the cohesive aesthetic.

“We Got the Reef” (2022)

Delta Delta Delta fully embraced comedic costuming with a production that prioritized fun and creativity. Among the most memorable elements were the lobster costumes, which leaned into the show's underwater theme through bold, exaggerated design.

Rather than aiming for realism, the costumes amplified the show's humor and theatricality, demonstrating the power of intentional silliness.

“So Tied Up” (2020)

Phi Kappa Chi stood out in 2020 with intricately detailed scarecrow costumes that reflected a high level of craftsmanship. The designs incorporated texture and layered elements that created visual depth onstage, helping performers fully embody their characters.

In a year where many productions relied on simpler visual approaches, the effort and creativity behind these costumes elevated the show and left a lasting impression.

The most successful Sing costumes add an attention to detail that fully immerses audience members in the performance. Whether through subtle accessories, exaggerated character pieces or immersive thematic design, costuming provides the visual framework that allows Sing productions to fully come to life.

Lariat file photos

Why do students love Sing?

ALEXANDRA BREWER
Arts & Life Writer

Every fall, students pack Waco Hall for All-University Sing, one of Baylor's oldest traditions. For a few hours, the campus comes together, cheering, laughing and watching student organizations perform in a competition that's been part of campus life for decades.

Matthew Hardin, alumnus and former member of Tau Kappa Epsilon, said his first Sing was all about the energy.

“Coming together with all my friends and putting on a show and hearing the crowd get involved, that was my favorite,” Hardin said.

Hardin said what makes Sing such a special tradition is the community.

“The sense of community that Sing brings about whenever everyone gets together and puts on their show,” Hardin said. “It's really cool.”

Putnam Valley, N.Y., senior Christian Dilapi said that he enjoyed the talent in every performance.

“I think one of the best things about Sing is that it gives so many different kinds of talented people opportunities to show off their talents,” Dilapi said. “Obviously, there's people who are singing, but there's also people who are just extraordinary at dance, and not to mention the production that goes into it.”

Dilapi said that he believes that it's the effort that keeps people coming back each year.

“I think it's how well done all of the acts are,” Dilapi said. “If you have someone, for example, who comes from out of town, and they just hear about this and they go, they're going to be impressed pretty much by everything.”

Dilapi also said that the preparation is one of the most fascinating experiences of Sing.

“It really is because these students work so hard at what they do, and they come up, and all of them come out with a good product nonetheless,” Dilapi said.

Roanoke freshman Jacey Hamilton hasn't gone to see Sing before, but is already caught up in the tradition.

“I'm looking forward to watching all my girls in Sing,” Hamilton said. “They're gonna do so good.”

Hamilton said that she believes the tradition is bigger than any one performance, and believes that what makes Sing so special is the sense of community.

“I just think watching everybody come together, and all be a community, just one school together, is such a special thing,” Hamilton said.

Even as a freshman who hasn't yet seen the show, Hamilton said she could already appreciate the legacy behind it.

“It's a tradition that dates back a long, long time, full of super fun singing and dancing with all the organizations,” Hamilton said.

Hamilton said the rivalry and competition between groups are part of what she's looking forward to and what makes Sing exciting.

“I definitely think a lot of it is a competition,” Hamilton said. “I think all the organizations enjoy competing against each other and see who can outdo each other.”

CAST YOUR VOTES ON B3

Sing Alliance creates friendships, fosters community

ADDISON GERNENZ
Intern

All-University Sing has captured the hearts of the Baylor community for nearly 75 years, but the performers were largely limited to Greek life until 1997, when Sing Alliance was created.

Oak Park, Ill., senior Carina Scholtens, Sing Alliance's administrative assistant, said that her participation in Sing has made a significant impact on her time at Baylor.

This year, Scholtens will be participating in her sixth season with Sing Alliance, two of which were Pigskin.

“The three goals of Sing Alliance are to have fun, make friends and perform to the best of our ability,” Scholtens said. “These are not mutually exclusive. These are things which we all need to bring in to compose Sing.”

For Scholtens, Sing fever began during Line Camp when her group won the award for best choreography. Hoping to participate in Sing her freshman year, Scholtens asked her Line Camp leader for information on the event.

Scholtens' Line Camp leader was alumna Eli Siatkowski, who was with Sing Alliance for four years and on leadership for two years. She enthusiastically advised Scholtens to join Sing Alliance, and the rest is history.

“Sing Alliance is an organization that attracts people from all majors, years and backgrounds,” Siatkowski said. “I met so many people I wouldn't have otherwise met through participating.”

Siatkowski is still in touch with many of her friends she made through Sing, some of whom are still students and performing this season.

“It's been fun and nostalgic



Mesha Mittanasala | Photographer

SING SENSATION Sing Alliance performed “Psst... I See Dead People” during 2026 All-University Sing.

to hear their updates about how everything's been going,” Siatkowski said.

Sing Alliance was monumental in shaping Siatkowski's time at Baylor. Scholtens said the same, noting that Sing has created a deep community in her life, both through strengthening existing friendships and cultivating new ones.

“As we rehearse, as we do the tech and preparations, getting closer to Sing, you're inevitably going to bond,” Scholtens said.

For Sing Alliance, part-time commitment is five hours weekly, and full-time commitment adds another four hours.

“It's my first season doing full-time,” Scholtens said. “But I love it and want to go out with a bang. My last hurrah, if you will.”

Byram, N.J., sophomore Harlow Yappen is in her first season with Sing Alliance and said it is one of her favorite parts of this semester.

“I love it,” Yappen says. “I'm definitely doing it again, although I'll probably do part-time.”

From being in formations together and going through steps to admitting you don't know what you're doing and laughing when the other person agrees, Sing Alliance presents several opportunities to meet people and build new, meaningful friendships.

One of these opportunities is “family groups.”

“You're with a leadership member and a few other people,” Scholtens said. “You'll take breaks out of rehearsal, get to know one another, chat.”

Scholtens also said that the energy Sing Alliance has created within its group is one of the most special parts.

“I love the community,” Scholtens said. “I think having people who are voluntarily committing their time to Sing has created and fostered this really passionate community.”

While Yappen's background in figure skating and ballet has helped her prepare for Sing, Scholtens' dance history starts with Sing Alliance.

Yappen encourages anyone interested in singing or dancing to try Sing Alliance, regardless of skill level, jokingly calling herself a “back row baddie.”

“College is for exploration and getting out of your comfort zone,” Scholtens said. “Sing Alliance is a really happy compromise between your student life as you know it and this organization that encourages you to put yourself out there.”

Scholtens emphasized the meaning of Sing and how it can give students' college life a larger purpose.

“I love participating to the best of my ability in something which is greater than myself,” Scholtens said. “It's a really special part of Sing Alliance, and the main source for my continued commitment.”

Students behind All-University Sing

CHLOE WILSON
Intern

Sequins, choreography and months of late-night rehearsals are coming together once again as Baylor University prepares for one of its most anticipated student traditions: All-University Sing.

Sing is produced by Baylor's Student Productions Committee, a student-led programming board that plans and coordinates several major campus events.

The committee's mission centers on inspiring creativity, fostering leadership and maintaining the excellence of long-standing Baylor traditions through student-driven productions.

La Quinta, Calif., senior Jenna French describes the tasks as anything from working with the individual Sing chairs, attending the open stages, tech rehearsals and shows to keeping each of their organizations on top of deadlines and submissions.

"As a student producer specifically, I typically dedicate anywhere from four to 12 hours a week in the spring amidst all the Waco Hall rehearsals, meetings with chairs, student production meetings and any outside rehearsals I am invited to," French said.

French's work with Kappa Omega Tau and Delta Delta Delta has proved both engaging and exciting, as she has learned to grapple with the differences between working with a



Mesha Mittanasala | Photographer

MOUSING AROUND La Quinta, Calif., senior Jenna French presents Delta Delta Delta's act.



Mesha Mittanasala | Photographer

BEHIND THE SCENES La Mesa, Calif., senior Giavanna Russo presents Alpha Phi's act.

fraternity and a sorority.

"Being a producer for a group of boys always lends itself to goofy situations," French said. "For example, having to cut the bottom six inches off all of the pants and teaching a boy how to sew a button back on."

Members of the committee work behind the scenes to guide participating organizations through rehearsals, logistics and performance preparation. From managing schedules and contracts to ensuring productions meet technical, student

producers play a key role in bringing each act to life.

La Mesa, Calif., senior Giavanna Russo has also been involved in Sing as a student producer, working to help make the Zeta Tau Alpha and Sigma Chi act an amazing addition to

this year's performance.

"Working with Zeta and Sigma Chi has been really fun," Russo said. "Their chairs are incredible and care about the show a lot ... I think that they know our goals are the same, and so we are all able to work towards making their act the best it can be."

For many students, participation in Sing becomes a defining part of their Baylor experience. The production offers opportunities not only for performers but also for students interested in leadership, stage management and event planning.

"Being a student producer entails helping your assigned student organization get their vision for their Sing act onto Waco Hall's stage," Russo said. "Our goal is for them to make Pigskin — or even better — to place."

Beyond the spectacle onstage, organizers say Sing reflects the broader Baylor community by bringing together students from different organizations and backgrounds to celebrate creativity and teamwork.

"Whether it was brainstorming with the Zeta and Sigma Chi chairs, bringing the Alpha Phi act to life or getting the KOTs excited to bring back their act from last year, I have made so many friends through this process that I am so grateful to have been able to work with them all," Russo said.

Calm in chaos: Performers find rest during Sing season

ISABEL VORST
Intern

The season of All-University Sing can be an intense period of late nights, crowded calendars and piles of untouched homework. During times that can be so chaotic, it becomes essential for students to find ways to rest, enabling them to balance their lives and recharge so that they can do their best and enjoy the process of Sing.

Students participating in Sing said there is a common theme of exhaustion for both the crew and the performers. Students have different strategies to find calm amid the Sing storm.

FINDING REST

Bryant, Ark., sophomore Lochlan Walsh, a Kappa Alpha Theta member, defined rest as doing something you enjoy and find real fulfillment from.

"During college, it can be so easy to orient our rest time towards doing more or turning our brains off by turning to technology," Walsh said. "However, real leisure involves simply being, not doing."

Rest can also be a shift in mindset that relieves some of the pressure that comes with the performance.

Marietta, Ga., sophomore Shelby Grace Sparrow, Alpha Delta Pi sing chair, said compartmentalization is a major part of staying mentally fresh during Sing. She also said she prioritizes studying and watching movies with her friends to manage the chaos.

"Rest in this season is often reminding myself that the world is bigger than Sing," Sparrow said. "So many of my sorority sisters are my best friends, but when rehearsal is over for the day, I tend to give myself a break and spend time with my friends who aren't in the chapter."

PLACES OF REFUGE

Students said one of the most important things to have during Sing is a place to take a break; to leave all the stressors at the door and find peace in solitude.

Walsh said she loves to recharge by being outside.

"I'll often go for long drives with my windows down or go on walks in Cameron Park," Walsh said.

Walsh also said some of her favorite places to take breaks on campus are the garden on the bottom floor of Moody



Jake Schroeder | Photographer

AIRLINES Parker, Colo., sophomore Lindsey Fox and Baytown senior Ella Carsey perform Alpha Delta Pi's act "Flight 1851."

Memorial Library or the Garden of Contentment outside Armstrong Browning Library.

"I also enjoy going to the farmers market in downtown on Saturdays ... and discovering new places I've never been to in Waco," Walsh said.

Others seek comfort and solace from familiar communities. Sparrow says she tends to recharge at her residence hall with her friends.

"I'm grateful to have an incredible community there as well as in my sorority," Sparrow said.

FAITH & AFFIRMATIONS

Walsh said she finds peace through faith and Scripture.

"During this time, I tend to lean heavily on stories in the Bible that involve women showing strength and obedience," Walsh said. "I love the story of Mary and Martha where Jesus emphasizes the importance is simply being versus doing."

Another decision she has made during the Sing season is listening strictly to worship music, which she finds brings her a lot of peace during the times of chaos.

TIPS & TRICKS

Sparrow emphasized the importance of organization, quiet time and prioritizing knowing your part well for future Sing participants.

"Color-code your Google Calendar," Sparrow said. "It helps me so much to see everything I need to attend — Sing and otherwise — laid out in front of me. It may still be overwhelming, but it's imperative that performers have their schedule locked in their minds. Calendars make it 10 times easier, so I don't need to remember everything off the top of my head."

Prioritizing self-care and rest time was Walsh's main emphasis.

She also advised trying to find healthier things to turn to than just screen time when feeling exhausted. She tries to set her phone aside during homework and avoids social media before bed.

"Try to schedule some time for yourself throughout the week, not just on weekends," Walsh said. "For me, this usually means finding a brief window in my day to sit outside and waking up earlier to read my Bible and eat breakfast. It makes me feel more positive when going about my day and [I] have more energy."



Jake Schroeder | Photographer

GRILLIN' Beta Upsilon Chi performs "Grill of Rights" for All-University Sing 2026.

Sing participants learn life lessons beyond stage

STACIE BOYLS
Arts & Life Writer

Under the bright stage lights and carefully guarded themes, first-time All-University Sing participants at Baylor discover newfound excitement and appreciation for performing arts.

For Coppell junior Emma Thurman, stepping into the world of Sing rehearsals meant placing herself into an unfamiliar role.

"I was a little worried going into it because I don't really dance that much," Thurman said. "I was nervous that I was going to make a fool of myself on stage."

Like many Sing participants, Thurman came from an athletic background rather than a performing arts one. But as rehearsals progressed, her uncertainty began to fade, replaced by confidence built through repetition and encouragement from student leaders and fellow participants.

"The Sing chairs have just been so awesome," Thurman said. "If you're getting something wrong, they're like, 'Let's figure out why and then let's just work until we get it.'"

Sing, one of Baylor's longest-standing traditions, requires weeks of preparation, with students balancing evening rehearsals alongside academic and personal responsibilities. For Thurman, the experience forced her to rethink how she managed her time to balance productivity and self-care.

"It's been a learning curve," Thurman said. "Educationally, it has taught me how to balance my time better, being intentional with where I'm putting my time and making sure I can focus on everything I need to do."

Findlay, Ohio, sophomore Jackson Zinna said he witnessed similar growth among his fraternity brothers, many of whom had never performed on stage before and were nervous about the process.

Zinna, who participated in orchestra and competitive show choir in high school, said he recognized the anxiety of his fellow performers as they prepared for the first tech run on stage. Tech runs on stage remove the safety nets such as mirrors and music recordings and replace them with a sea of potential audience members and live instrumentation.

"When you remove those mirrors,

it's really difficult," Zinna said. "Now it's just the dark abyss of the audience. That's when it settles in, and you realize how much focus it takes."

He said many participants developed an appreciation for performing arts after experiencing the physical and mental demands firsthand.

"You have to have the dance be muscle memory so you can focus on singing," Zinna said. "I think there is a newfound respect because they realize how much work actually goes into it."

Aside from learning routines, Thurman said that Sing also provided something she hadn't expected — a creative outlet.

"It's given me an opportunity to express my creativity," Thurman said. "I think that's so important, especially for younger kids. There are other things besides sports and academics where you can find your passions."

Both students said the experience strengthened their appreciation for arts education and emphasized its importance for personal and creative development.

"I think it is probably one of the most important things," Zinna said. "You work hours and hours on something, and then you get to go on stage and do it. There's nothing like the feeling of knowing all that hard work paid off."

Beyond individual growth, Sing has also strengthened relationships among participants. Long rehearsals and shared challenges created opportunities for students to bond through shared struggle and success.

"I'm doing it with so many of my best friends, and we just really get to experience it together," Thurman said. "It's been so great for my friendships."

Zinna said the collaborative nature of Sing creates a sense of accountability and teamwork similar to athletics.

"We're all here, and it's a team effort," Zinna said. "Without everyone working together and uplifting each other, it's not going to work on stage."

As performance night approaches, nervousness is giving way to anticipation for both students. After weeks of secrecy, rehearsals and preparation, they are ready to share their work with an audience.

"I'm super excited," Thurman said. "We finally get to go on stage with our costumes and just have a good time."

A&L

CAST YOUR VOTES



Mesha Mittanasala | Photographer



Mesha Mittanasala | Photographer



Jake Schroeder | Photographer



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Sing

REVIEWS

ALPHA PHI "No Strings Attached"



Opening with poodle skirts and ponytails to the tune of "Don't Stop 'til You Get Enough" by Michael Jackson, Alpha Phi immediately encapsulated the audience with energy.

As enthusiastic choreography continued, a quartet of golden-outfitted girls performed a series of harmonies and nostalgic greaser-era dance moves.

As the theme of vintage touring musicians continued, the group did a jazz rendition of "Valerie" by Amy Winehouse. At this point, the golden quartet picked up their harmonies once again, however, this time it seemed like the members were losing momentum.

As "Blue Suede Shoes" came on for the closing dance number, the group found their energy. Ending in an energetic swarm of members reaching out to the audience, this number had unique, flashy costuming with a mix of entertaining choreography.

DELTA TAU DELTA "Model Citizens"



I have to admit, a construction worker-themed rendition of "Poker Face" redone as "Fashion Taste" was not on my 2026 Sing bingo card. The twerking wasn't either.

However, Delta Tau Delta brought both ... unfortunately. Midway through, the group performed "Poison" by Bell Biv DeVoe and while the song was entertaining, ultimately the vocals and choreography could have been improved. The group pulled out syncopated ripple choreography toward the end showcasing creativity, however I wish that same innovation flowed throughout the rest of the routine.

DELTA DELTA DELTA "When A Mouse Eats A Cookie"



Starting off with impressive choreography centered around "If You Give a Mouse a Cookie," Tri Delt had an impressive mix of great vocals, choreography and costumes.

Outfitted in pink cocktail dresses and silver shiny mouse costumes, I appreciated the minimalistic yet clean look that carried throughout the routine.

The group covered "Just Can't Get Enough" by the Black Eyed Peas but switched the lyrics to "I just want to eat cookies all day," leaving me both giggling and grinning from ear to ear.

The routine reached a blissful peak at the end as the group did its own version of "Cell Block Tango" from "Chicago," which was both a wonderful and exciting surprise. Overall, the vocals were unmatched with an array of intricate riffs, runs and harmonies.



PHI CHI "Cold as Ice!"



Immediate points for adorableness, as the group opened with a beautiful multi-harmony rendition of "Let It Snow."

Choreography and vocals were on par for the group. I was fully encapsulated while Phi Chi took the audience to a winter wonderland with its snowman-themed performance.

I giggled my way through the second half as the snowmen pretended to melt while performing "Hot in Herre" by Nelly including lyrics like "I am getting so hot, I'm gonna melt my snow off."

If I could change anything it would be the Spirit Halloween-esque Snowman costumes. With stiff unmovable fabric, it looked both restricting and stuffy.

SING ALLIANCE "Psst... I See Dead People"



Creativity pulsed throughout this group's opening. With an Egyptian and archaeologist theme, I was immediately impressed by the vocals, which never wavered despite the high-energy choreography.

The innovation continued with its playlist, which included "Calling All The Monsters" from "A.N.T. Farm" and "Ain't It Fun" by Paramore.

However, halfway through, they performed a rendition of "Not Like Us" by Kendrick Lamar which seemed a bit outdated and out of touch.

As the routine went on the vocal chops were top-notch and the theme was theoretically cute. However, the execution needed a bit of work as far as choreography, and "Not Like Us" maybe could've been switched out for a more conscious option.

KAPPA ALPHA THETA "London's Calling"



Outfitted in plain blue and red dresses, I wish the costumes could've been more intricate.

The theme of "London Calling" was interesting, however it didn't provide much of an opportunity for themes or storyline.

Despite the mellow shortcomings in theme, the vocals and playlist were top-notch. With a mix of beautiful soprano and alto voices, the routine had diversity and talent.

The choreography was well planned out and provided for multiple entertaining dance sequences.

BETA THETA PI & KAPPA CHI ALPHA "Hollywood Breakdown"



A concert in "Bear City Music Hall" immediately intrigued me for a theme idea. "Popular" from "Wicked" to "Applause" by Lady Gaga, the playlist choice was encapsulating, yet they lost me with underwhelming vocals and theme.

When a group of men came on stage singing a cover of "Fabulous" from "High School Musical 2," I was smiling, just a little confused at the relation to the rest of the routine.

As the dancing continued I was left wanting more congruent themes, honed in vocals and slightly different costumes.

Ultimately this routine was cute; it just needed a little more finesse.

KAPPA ALPHA "Baylor's First Dance"



Opening with a joke about "not being allowed to dance at Baylor 30 years ago," the theme immediately piqued my curiosity.

With songs like "Smells Like Teen Spirit" by Nirvana and "Iris" by the Goo Goo Dolls the playlist was one of the best parts, the vocals unfortunately fell a few categories below.

The choreography attempted to be as good as the playlist but also could have used some je ne sais quoi.

PI BETA PHI "Out of the Box"



The routine began with a tsunami of energy. Featuring the most enthusiastic vocals and choreography we had seen so far, the "Santa's Workshop" theme felt bland but eventually tied together with a blend of innovation.

As the routine went on the vocals kept impressing the audience with amazing tone, riffs and range coming from the singers.

The costumes sadly fell short for me. A missed opportunity from Pi Beta Phi to add tinsel, sparkle and stonies to their Christmas-themed attire.

Overall, a really great production and solid performance, though.

SIGMA CHI & ZETA TAU ALPHA "The Love Show"



With costumes that were both eye-catching and sparkling with beautiful design, this performance encapsulated the audience from the beginning.

The theme "The Love Show" provided an opportunity for a top-notch lineup of songs. Unfortunately, the playlist chosen didn't meet the mark.

Energy seemed to teeter during the second half as the group lost congruency in vocals and choreography.

KAPPA OMEGA TAU "Banker's Paradise"



I'll be honest here, I wasn't sure if Kappa Omega's 1990s bank teller outfits meant I was in for an Abraham Lincoln tribute performance. Turns out the top hats and tall white socks were congruent with the "Omega Bank" theme.

Despite the attire, the choreography was absolutely on par. As for the vocals, there were some moments of top-notch riffing and some moments that just didn't meet the status quo.

Overall, there were some nice moments, but I wished there was a better playlist and less confusing theme.

KALENA REYNOLDS
Arts & Life Editor

ALPHA DELTA PI "Flight 1851"



This plane-crash-themed performance was a mix of moments that were both over and underwhelming. The simple costumes were once again a missed opportunity to incorporate creative elements in the performance.

The vocals started off strong. However, they wavered as the performance went on. What didn't waiver were unique moments that emphasized the theme, like a jungle animal and an SOS-themed dance break.

CHI OMEGA & ALPHA TAU OMEGA "Careful What You Witch For"



"Witchy Woman" by the Eagles started the performance while a giant green cauldron resting in the middle of the stage piqued my curiosity. Shortly after a woman in a witch's outfit left the stage and a group of Hansel and Gretel-dressed members broke into a lively, enjoyable dance number that was as pleasing to watch as it was to listen to.

Featuring a witchy dance number to "Disturbia" by Rihanna, this performance was high-energy, entertaining and well-planned.

From the choreography and playlist to the outfits and vocals, this was an impressive and exciting performance.



Jake Schroeder | Photographer
Masha Mittanasala | Photographer

ALPHA CHI OMEGA "Catch Her If You Can"



I'm assuming this piece was inspired by The Louvre jewel thief and boy did I love it. From a breaking news broadcast to a jewel burglary reenactment, this performance was entertaining and resonated with great vocals.

The performance included a variety of beautiful costumes from trench coat dresses to thief outfits.

Unfortunately, the playlist did not match up with the incredibly innovative theme due to a lineup of songs that were almost fully unrecognizable.

BETA UPSILON CHI "Grill of Rights"



This performance was an unexpected yet joyous performance featuring a playlist full of 2000s dad hits, jorts, "Made in the USA" shirts and a full-on barbecue smoker.

The crowd went wild for a silly rendition of "It's the Hard-Knock Life" and goofy dance breaks.

Illuminating an element of humor, this performance made me full-on belly laugh.

It was entertaining with great vocals and silly costumes. The idea was incredibly original, with perfectly placed punch lines and amazing choreography, BYX did not disappoint.

SIGMA ALPHA EPSILON "Bear-ly Made It!"



I kept trying to understand the theme of this one, but I never fully grasped it. I had high hopes when I originally saw the mountainous backdrop and camper attire. However, when the bear onesies came onstage while pretending to eat a trash can full of honey, I was even more confused.

I can see what the group was going for and it still missed the mark. There were impressive parts filled with fun choreography sequences but overall I wanted more theme, better outfits and a more unique playlist.

KAPPA KAPPA GAMMA "Together We Can!"



The costumes were simply unbeatable from rhinestone blue coveralls to army dresses, this performance inspired by a multitude of monumental historical moments and icons was absolutely unforgettable.

Taking inspiration from the "We Can Do It!" poster and other war-era culture, Kappa not only brought innovation but high-energy choreography that topped off the amazing theme.

The only thing missing was the playlist aspect. Otherwise, this group shined in a multitude of ways.

KAPPA SIGMA "So Fresh, So Clean"



The "KE Mall Food Court" theme felt a little too similar to TKE's 2025 Sing theme, "Papa Tiki's Balliamo!"

There were multiple engaging, silly moments in the performance. However, I wanted something more engaging as far as the theme, costumes and music went.

Don't get me wrong, there were multiple parts with soaring, impressive vocals, however I think there was more potential here than what I saw.



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How Sing production has transitioned through decades

ALEXANDRA BREWER
Arts & Life Writer

For decades, All-University Sing has been a cornerstone of Baylor life, connecting generations of students through a shared tradition. Alumni still remember the thrill of performances they were once a part of, while current students feel the excitement and responsibility of carrying that legacy forward.

For Brentwood, Tenn., senior Ella Hickman and head Sing chair for Kappa Kappa Gamma, Sing is more than a tradition — it's a personal passion. Hickman grew up in theater and has been watching the event since high school.

"I would say I'm pretty well-known with it," Hickman said. "Sing is actually a big reason why I chose Baylor, just because I grew up in theater and I loved it so much."

Hickman said that past acts often focused on a simple theme with song and dance, whereas today's performances are more complex, requiring a full storyline with a beginning, climax and ending.

"I think it's changed tremendously," Hickman said. "I think at least in the last couple of years, there's been a shift. In the past, it was more so just a seven-minute act of song and dance, but I think nowadays it's definitely more in-depth, where there's a required storyline."

The change has raised the bar for all participants. Every year, new elements and choreography push other groups to step up their game.

"It feels like this massive off-Broadway production," Hickman said.

Even with modern technology and polished performances, Sing remains rooted in campus pride and tradition. Students still work to perfect blocking, costumes and choreography, while alumni return to relive the energy of the performances. Hickman said the presence of alumni adds motivation, rather than pressure, for performers.

For alumni from previous decades, Sing was both familiar and different. Shannon Seale, Baylor alumna and former member of Alpha Delta Pi, who performed in a "Charlie's Angels" themed act in the early 2000's, recalls rehearsals full of laughter and camaraderie.

"It felt more fun than competitive at the time, but I just don't think that I realized how competitive it was," Seale said.

Back then, rehearsal spaces were often unconventional, like small community theaters in Waco, and performers practiced without the modern tools available today. Still, production values were impressive, with complex backdrops, colorful costumes and stage makeup.

While Sing was founded in 1953, through the years, a large part of the magic has come from the hidden preparation.

"It was very important, secrecy and element of surprise," Seale said. "We didn't have Stacy Riddle until I was a senior, so we were much more secluded when we practiced."

Sing in the 2020s continues to evolve while keeping its traditions. Fort Worth senior Katherine White competed with Sing Alliance as a freshman in the spring of 2023. She said her group focused heavily on research at the start of the semester, analyzing previous acts to learn what made them successful.

"We started our rehearsals at the very beginning of the semester by looking at previous sing acts that did really well and either won Sing or went on to Pigskin, and really



Lariat file photo

THROUGH THE AGES KOT finished second in 2012 with their act "Standing Small", which earned a 3 1/2 star Lariat Review.

just took into account what made them so good, whether that was the choreography or the cleanness of their act," White said.

She hopes future students will remember this era for its originality and dedication.

"I hope that they look back on our performances and take some inspiration from us," White said. "I think every act has done such a good job with originality of themes and costumes, and just so much hard work and dedication that gets put into it."

What has changed most is access. Today, tickets can be purchased online, and performances are sometimes recorded for wider audiences. Social media has created new ways to share highlights, whereas past students relied solely on in-person viewing.

"Not a lot feels different except that I saw somewhere you could buy tickets to watch it online, and that's pretty neat," Seale said. "If you didn't get them right away, you were totally out of luck"



I would say I'm pretty well-known with it. Sing is actually a big reason why I chose Baylor, just because I grew up in theater and I loved it so much.

ELLA HICKMAN
KKG HEAD SING CHAIR

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PLATO'S CLOSET



Mesha Mittanasala | Photographer

WITCH-FUL THINKING For Sing 2026, Chi Omega and Alpha Tau Omega paired with their act, "Careful What You Witch For." Chi Omega won Sing in 2025, and Alpha Tau Omega placed second.

Sing weekend highlights divide in student engagement

JULIANA VASQUEZ
Staff Writer

As Greek organizations and Sing Alliance prepare for opening night this weekend, students not involved in the campus tradition continue about their day-to-day lives, unaware or unfazed by the air of anticipation around Waco Hall and Stacy Riddle Forum.

On All-University Sing and Pigskin weekends, Baylor's campus divides between students who care that Sing is happening and those whose lives remain unimpacted by the event.

According to a 2021-22 Student Life report, "37% of undergraduate females are ... involved in a sorority and 19% of undergraduate males are involved in a fraternity."

These students, however, only make up a fraction of Baylor's campus, a fraction that goes unnoticed when Sing season rolls around.

This week has passed like any other for Waco sophomore Ailsa Lewis. In fact, Lewis didn't even know Sing was happening

this weekend.

"I do know that it happens in the spring, and I know some people in Greek organizations that have been working on it a lot recently ... but I didn't know it was this weekend," Lewis said.

Although Lewis notices her classmates getting excited about the Baylor tradition, she said it doesn't really affect her.

"I think I've seen people with costumes and things," Lewis said. "The energy gets up a little bit, but I don't think that there's really anything that affects me."

Lewis thinks Sing is a great opportunity to see the art participating organizations create from the event and is especially

interested in the technical aspect of the performance.

"I think a lot of cool art comes from it," Lewis said. "I've also done some tech in the past, so I've been interested in being a part of the production side of it before."

Palms River, N.J., senior Lena Martinez was a participant in All-University Sing through her involvement in Sing Alliance, which can sometimes be overshadowed by the influx of Greek organizations that participate in Sing.

"Sing Alliance is definitely an iconic group," Martinez said. "We take pride in that identity, that we are not Greek life, but we're still part

of it." Because Sing Alliance doesn't have the same budget as sororities or fraternities do to draw on, Martinez said Sing Alliance had to be creative with the funding to put on their act.

"Greek orgs, because they have other revenues that they can pull from ... obviously have a larger budget, and Sing Alliance doesn't," Martinez said. "Because they try to make it so inclusive, the budget is very set to what people can contribute ... but I don't necessarily think that overshadowed us."

When comparing All-University Sing to other Baylor traditions, Martinez thinks Sing sits among many of Baylor's unique traditions.

"I think Sing is one of the unique things we have — like running the line is pretty unique — having bears on campus is pretty unique, and I think Sing is right up with that," Martinez said. "Other colleges have tried to copy what we do, but it just doesn't hit the same."

“Other colleges have tried to copy what we do, but it just doesn't hit the same

LENA MARTINEZ
PALMS RIVER, N.J., SENIOR

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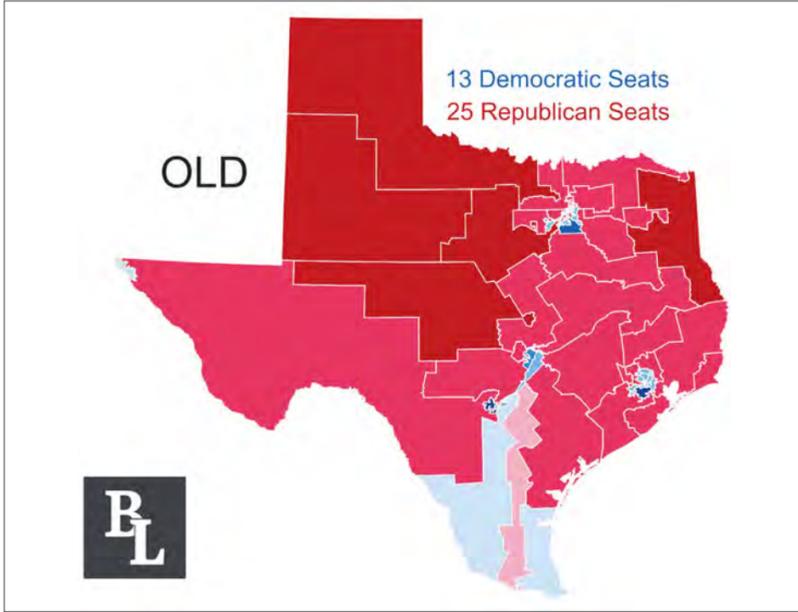
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Most Entertaining: _____

Best Costumes: _____

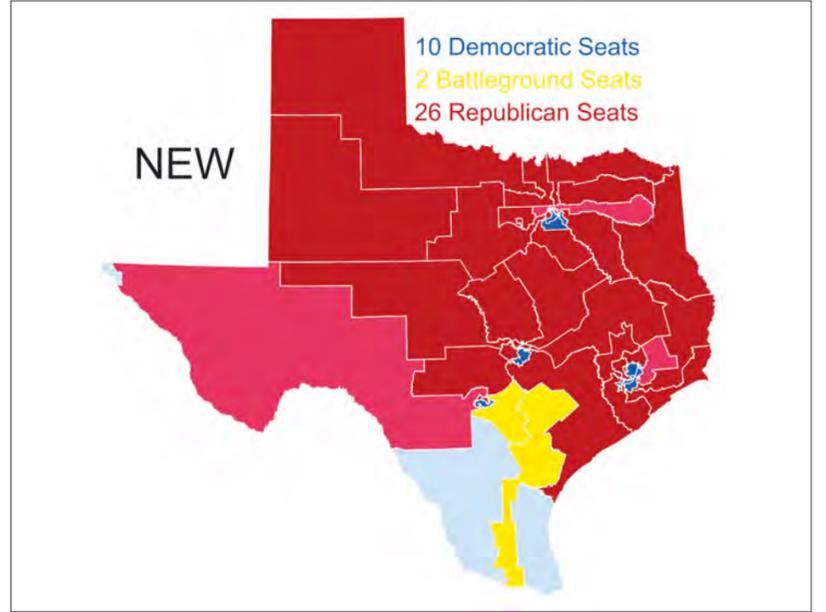
Best Choreography: _____

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Tolga Sahin | Intern

BATTLEGROUND Texas' previous congressional map, featuring 25 Republicans and 13 Democrats before redistricting.



Tolga Sahin | Intern

VOTING The new congressional map was drawn to pick up five Democratic seats, but midterm turnout dynamics created two battlegrounds and only one possible pickup.

Early voting underway for Texas primary election

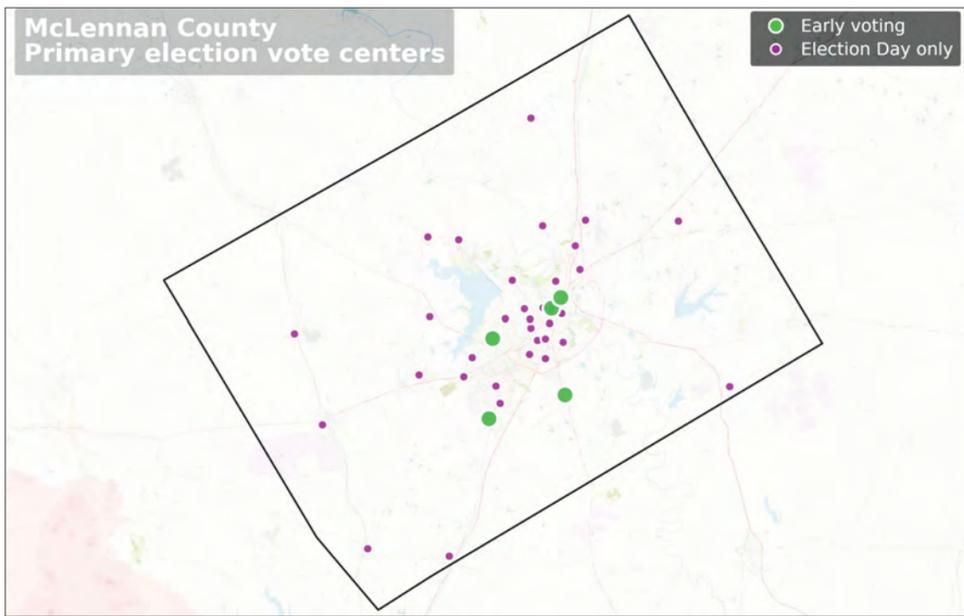
TOLGA SAHIN
Intern

The 2026 midterms — widely seen as the first referendum on the Trump administration — are underway as Texas opened early voting for its March 3 primary, the first contest in what is projected to be the most expensive midterm cycle in American history.

Baylor students registered in McLennan County were eligible to start casting ballots Tuesday. This year contains a competitive U.S. Senate race, newly drawn congressional maps, state legislatures and local offices. Texas is an open primary state, which means voters do not register with a party, but they must choose a Republican or Democratic ballot at the polls. After that choice, voters are locked into that party's runoff — if needed.

Early voting for the March 3 primary goes from Feb. 17 through Feb. 27. This week, polls are open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., but hours expand starting Saturday from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Students who will not be in McLennan County during early voting and Election Day can apply to vote by mail, as can voters who are 65 or older, disabled or expecting to give birth within three weeks of the



Tolga Sahin | Intern

EARLY VOTING McLennan County primary early voting centers colored green and election day voting centers purple.

election. The deadline to request a mail ballot is 5 p.m. Friday. Voters must select a party on the application to receive the correct primary ballot.

McLennan County has five early voting locations. Registered voters must bring an approved photo ID and can cast a ballot at any of them:

McLennan County Elections Administration Office, Waco Multi-Purpose Community Center, Waco First Assembly of God Church, Hewitt City Hall and Robinson Community Center.

On Election Day, polls will be open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. at 39 vote

centers across the county. In a race, if none of the candidates receive more than 50% of the vote, the top two will advance to the May 26 runoffs.

Waco freshman Hutson Harper said he is eager to cast his first midterm ballot.

"I look forward to being

able to do my civil duty and taking part in elections, being able to vote in the, not just the major midterms, where the two parties go against each other, but in the primary election as well," Harper said. "Because I think it is equally as important to be able to pick a good candidate in the chosen party compared to being able to vote in the general election as well."

Whichever primary a voter chooses, they will see races for U.S. Senate, U.S. House, governor, lieutenant governor, attorney general, comptroller, land commissioner, agriculture commissioner, railroad commissioner, Texas Senate, Texas House, State Board of Education, judicial seats and local offices, including McLennan County sheriff.

Looking back into history, the party holding the White House regularly plays defense in midterms. Out of 41 midterms shown on the graph, the president's party lost seats in 37 of them — usually by double digits, and occasionally by landslide losses that had impacted the country for years.

Only four midterms show a net gain for the president's party: 1902, 1934, 1998 and 2002. Ahead of the 2026 midterms, Republicans are looking into breaking a

VOTING INFO >> C4

A guide to McLennan County's local primary races

JULIANA VASQUEZ
Staff Writer

From housing policies to public transportation, local leaders influence the everyday realities of college life, and primary elections are students' first opportunity to weigh in.

This year's McLennan County ballot includes five contested elections, with two Democratic candidates and 11 Republican candidates.

All candidate quotes in this guide were taken from the Feb. 5 McLennan County Republican Women's State & Local Republican Candidate Meet and Greet, and the Feb. 7 Democrats at the PACC forum. Here's a closer look at the contested races shaping this year's ballot.

COUNTY COMMISSIONER, PRECINCT NO. 2

The quality of the roads and bridges students drive on to get to class can be attributed to their county commissioner.

"The county commissioner is responsible for roads and bridges within their precinct and makes policy-making budget decisions," the Texas Association of Counties states on its website. Four commissioners per county are elected and serve on the commissioners court with the county judge, deciding the county's budget and tax rate and setting the salaries and benefits of elected county officials.

The current county commissioner for Precinct No. 2, Donis "D.L." Wilson, is running unopposed on the Republican ballot. However, the Democratic nominee is still undecided, with Jeremy Davis and Travis Gibson competing for the nomination.

Jeremy Davis

Davis is hoping to get Democrats a seat at the table in McLennan County, bringing his experience in public policy and budget management into this election season.

"I bring experience managing and overseeing budgets from a few thousand [to] over \$350 million," Davis said. "I know how to use funds in



Sam Gassaway | Photo Editor

RACES Democrats at the PACC, is an a campaign event for local, state and national seats.

a fiscally responsible way, but also how to invest so that we get the greatest possible gains for our community."

Following his high school graduation, Davis jumped into the political sector as an intern with Black Men for Bernie before returning to Waco to work as a behavior specialist with Waco ISD.

Inspired by his work with students, he founded a non-profit mentorship program, Mentor Waco, and was eventually elected to the Waco ISD Board of Trustees in 2021.

"We built five brand new schools across the city of Waco, bringing equity into our secondary campuses," Davis said. "Over 60% of those funds stay here, where they belong, right in McLennan County."

Davis critiqued the current Republican Commissioners Court, stating that they closed polling locations, gerrymandered county maps and broke the trust of the community.

"We definitely need our seat back because when we're at the table we can shape and help create the means for a prosperous future," Davis

said. "When we're not at the table, then we all pay the price."

Travis Gibson

Gibson has been involved in local politics in Bellmead since 2015, serving as a councilman for Precinct 2 and as mayor of Bellmead.

Gibson is currently a special education teacher for Waco ISD. No publicly available information detailing Gibson's plans for the office could be found at the time of publication.

DISTRICT CLERK

The district clerk ensures that the district court runs efficiently.

"The District Clerk's Office serves as registrar, recorder, and custodian of all court pleadings, instruments, and papers that are part of any legal cause of action," the McLennan County website reads. The office also organizes the jury selection process.

Republican candidates Connley Litton and Rebecca Eubank are vying for the district clerk's

position, as the current interim district clerk, Ralph Strother, is not running.

Connley Litton

Litton has served as the chief deputy clerk in the McLennan County District Clerk's Office for the last six years, and currently has his eye on the district clerk position.

"Our office started and worked over 8,000 cases last year. We begin every single case and work that case all the way through disposition," Litton said. "We've got six district courts; those courts have anywhere between 7,000-8,000 cases that are open and pending at any time. We handle every single one of them, and we do it well."

The chief deputy clerk serves as the right-hand man to the district clerk, with Litton utilizing his over 25 years of IT experience to manage the office. He hopes to continue to use these skills to save McLennan County taxpayers money.

"Our office has saved or benefited McLennan County taxpayers over \$1.1 million savings this year, [and] we're only beginning. I'm going to use my IT background and innovation to grow that ... and to save you more," Litton said. "And that's my goal, that's what me and my staff will continue to do, while still giving you the highest possible service that any office can give you."

Rebecca Eubank

Eubank has dedicated her life to public service, serving in the United States Air Force and local law enforcement, and hopes to continue serving the county as district clerk.

"I've seen firsthand how vital a strong and efficient criminal justice system is to the safety and well-being of our community," her campaign website reads.

Eubank's goal for the district clerk's position is to improve the office's transparency with taxpayers, taking their money into consideration in everything they do.

"I want to keep the office transparent, fair [and] efficient. All of the hardworking men and women over there need good support and a

BALLOT BATTLES >> C5



Mesha Mittanasala | Photographer

POP GOES THE PI PHI Pi Beta Phi performs "Out of the Box" during Sing. Organizations are given budgets for their act.

Sing stirs talk concerning inclusivity

GISELLE LEE
Staff Writer

As one walks into Waco Hall during All-University Sing, it's easy to become captivated by the glamour, the spectacle and the Broadway-style productions that grace the stage. However, multicultural fraternities and sororities say a bigger issue has been brought into the spotlight.

A general rule of Sing states that any club or organization chartered and recognized by Baylor University may take part in Sing. As a result, the event is marketed as an "all-university" affair. However, the rich history of Panhellenic organizations participating in Sing, along with the 20-organization limit in the Sing program, hinders multicultural representation.

The lack of representation in Sing is connected to a larger problem: the unequal distribution of resources and event coverage for multicultural organizations across campus, including the Unified Greek Council, a smaller council that promotes diversity and interest-based communities at Baylor.

Houston junior Olivia Chhlang, president of the Alpha Kappa Delta Phi sorority, said members of her sorority have participated in Sing in the past by joining Sing Alliance, the sole non-Pan Hellenic organization open to all students.

However, even with expressed interest within her sorority, numerous "intimidating" factors have hindered participation as an independent organization.

"The groups in Sing are so ginormous; our sorority is really small compared to the other ones," Chhlang said. "I feel like we also don't have as many [members] to participate in Sing, especially budget-wise or choreography-wise. We don't really have the resources available to do that."

Chhlang said size is a significant drawback, which she described as not feeling "welcomed to participate." This led them to focus on smaller performance-based events on campus instead.

"I feel like if we were to participate, it would be noticeably obvious that we are the minority," Chhlang said. "The only way we would be able to participate is if we collaborated with other multicultural organizations, for instance, sororities, to make up those numbers that you would usually see in Sing."

Dallas junior Cornelius Bisong, president of the Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity, agreed that there is interest in joining Sing across different multicultural sororities and fraternities, yet the path to being included in the all-university event remains narrow.

"I heard a couple other members within my council who have brought it up a couple times, talking about what could be a part of something like that, just because of how big of an audience it is and how big it is out there," Bisong said. "We don't really know what process we could go to even to be included in the event."

Bisong said joining Sing Alliance is not a "justified remedy to the issue." He proposed either changing the name of "All-University Sing" or gauging interest from multicultural fraternities and sororities by directly engaging with them.

"First, [see] if there's any interest towards participating in Sing, and then once they get that, just being able to open it up to us so that we can learn more information about what it takes to participate, the practice schedules and things like that," Bisong said. "Until they add the other organizations, maybe redefine the phrase to say something like 'Baylor University Panhellenic Sing.'"

Chhlang mentioned that "the outlets are there" to participate in multicultural events such as Stroll Off and AsianFest, but urged Baylor to boost promotion of cultural diversity.

"Baylor doesn't make it known as much compared to when advertising for Sing," Chhlang said. "That's not to say that there's a divide between Pan-Hellenic organizations and multicultural organizations, but people who see themselves in groups are obviously more open to wanting to join in and find their people. I think that Baylor could do more of a good job in promoting the diversity that is here instead of making it seem like there isn't any diversity here."

Jordy Dickey, director of student activities, said the department remains committed to "ongoing, intentional dialogue" with student leaders about how campus traditions can be more accessible, transparent and welcoming.

"We recognize that for some student organizations, particularly those with smaller memberships or more limited resources, participation in Sing can feel intimidating," Dickey said. "Those experiences are important to acknowledge, and they invite continued reflection on how well Sing delivers on its intended role as an all-university tradition."

Hundreds of hours, thousands of dollars

The monetary, time investment behind Sing

ABBY RATHBURN
Staff Writer

As the walls of Waco Hall begin to echo with songs and dancing, campus gears up for All-University Sing 2026. While opening night promises entertainment and dramatic reveals, what goes unnoticed is the real cost behind producing it all.

Although each organization varies in its allocation of funds, every organization invests hundreds of dollars into the production. Luckily, Baylor helps to reimburse its students, according to Delta Tau Delta Senior Head Sing Chair and Houston senior Vaughn Johnson.

"They give us a stage budget of \$4,000, \$3,500 plus \$500 extra for a practice base, but it's basically \$4,000," Johnson said.

Without these funds, Johnson said, many organizations would struggle to afford participating in this production. Even so, each organization must still budget for its own contribution to the overall production cost.

Arlington senior and Beta Upsilon Chi Sing Chair and Treasurer Miles McCavit said he had to prepare for the dent Sing would make in their treasury.

"Starting out, we had to budget \$5,000 to \$7,000 out of our budget just from the fall to prepare for the spring, to make sure we had enough money in the spring to start," McCavit said.

While this may be true for McCavit's organization, each organization approaches budgeting for the event differently. Beta Upsilon Chi covers a portion of its members' costuming expenses, with the remaining costs paid out of pocket by participants.

Zeta Tau Alpha takes a different approach, according to senior costume chair and Oley, Pa., senior

Charlotte Fisher.

"Our costumes are included in the dues," Fisher said. "You definitely have to find affordable ways to cut corners and where you can just do things yourself just to save money."

teaching practices, working on our backdrop, building our props, getting costume stuff or budgeting," Johnson said.

Depending on the number of participants, even standard participants must plan for at least six hours per week of Sing practice. As a combined act, Zeta and Sigma Chi have a total number of 190 participants — a packed stage.

Zeta Senior Sing Chair and Kingwood senior Camille Burton said the time commitment differs between participants.

"So, it's three hours on Sunday, three hours on either Monday or Tuesday, depending on their time commitment... most of the people out there are just practicing two days a week for three hours each," Burton said.

To keep their people motivated, leadership uses various engagement methods. Most stick to positive reinforcement through words of affirmation or even treats.

"We give out candy, gushers and snacks to try and incentivize them to do good," Burton said.

As the countdown to opening night begins, the pressure on leadership continues to grow. It seems as if all of their hard work over the past year-plus will be based on a few performances.

"I mean, we only have two more weeks of it, and so I keep trying to tell myself just get through it, but also, like, enjoy it, because you're never gonna be a part of something like this again," Burton said.

All in all, each of these members has stepped into their role with the shared goal of celebrating this time-honored Baylor tradition.

"There's something special about it, and I wouldn't subject myself to the amount of work it takes to make it happen if I didn't believe that," Johnson said.

This particular act, I would say it's probably over 200 hours of effort from me, whether that be choreographing, teaching practices, working on our backdrop, building our props, getting costume stuff or budgeting.

VAUGHN JOHNSON
HOUSTON SENIOR

Unlike BYX and Delt, Zeta is doing a paired act with the men's fraternity Sigma Chi. Fisher believes it has been eight years since Zeta's last pairing and wanted something special for her senior year. Even this presented new challenges.

In addition to monetary cost, Sing is a time-sucker, especially for members serving on executive committees.

"This particular act, I would say it's probably over 200 hours of effort from me, whether that be choreographing,

Freshmen find inclusive identity in Sing Alliance

AARAH SARDESAI
Intern

While Greek letters often dominate the stage for All-University Sing, one group stands out as the heart of the competition, allowing anyone with a pair of dancing shoes and a Baylor ID to take the stage: Sing Alliance.

Known for its high-energy themes and open-door policy, Sing Alliance has become the route for many freshmen looking to take the stage during their first year at Baylor. For Waco freshman Zayn Matthews and Montgomery freshman Haley Conner, the organization gave them more than just the stage; it gave them a family.

"As a freshman, this is the only group I can really join," Matthews said. "I wasn't looking to join a sorority, and I love that there's such a great diversity of students. You meet people you'd never cross paths with otherwise."

Conner, a member of the Golden Wave Band, was initially hesitant to join Sing Alliance until a senior friend convinced her to take the leap.

"It ended up being one of the best decisions I've made," Conner said. "I found a community and friends I would have never met otherwise. Even if you aren't in a sorority or fraternity, you can still be a part of this massive Baylor tradition."

While the final performance may look effortless, the road to Waco Hall is paved with



Jake Schroeder | Photographer

CAIRO-KE NIGHT Frisco freshman Brooke Fontana (center) performs in her first All-University Sing with Sing Alliance in its act "Psst... I See Dead People."

grueling seven-hour Saturday rehearsals and complex choreography. For those without a dance background, the learning curve can be very steep.

"The choreographers have so much experience, and many of us have none," Matthews said. "There's a bit of a barrier initially, but they are incredibly receptive and work with us until it clicks."

Conner agreed, noting that her background

in marching band helped with the nerves, but the footwork was a new challenge.

"Understanding what the choreographer wants versus what my body is doing is a challenge, but you learn as you go," Matthews said. "The energy starts building from the first rehearsal all the way to the main performance."

To fight the fatigue from long rehearsals, Sing Alliance uses a "Family Group" system, which is made up of small groups of 10 students

who take breaks, talk and relax with each other after practice.

"We have family groups that give out snacks and take breaks together," Matthews said. "It ensures that even in a large act, you never feel like just a number."

The bonding extends beyond the rehearsal hall. Conner highlighted a favorite tradition that solidifies the group's "all-university" spirit.

"At the end of every rehearsal, we do a chant together," Conner said. "And after opening night, everyone goes to IHOP. It's those moments where you realize how nice everyone is; you can just strike up a conversation and be friends with people you've never met."

As the competition inches closer, both students reflected on what a win would mean for the group. While Sing Alliance often competes against well-funded Greek acts, their goal is often the People's Choice award.

"It would feel very accomplishing," Conner said. "It just goes to show that all the hard work you put into it means something in the end."

While Conner plans to perform with her sorority next year, she credits Sing Alliance for giving her a strong foundation. Matthews, however, is already looking forward to leadership within the group.

"I'd love to be a leader for props and backdrop," Matthews said. "If you're even a little curious about being on stage, try it. You learn time management, and you make friends for life."



Mesha Mittanasala | Photographer

TICKETS, PLEASE! Student who didn't snag tickets when they became available can stop by the Waco Hall ticketing booth an hour before the show to potentially get one last minute.

Students struggle to find tickets for Sing

ZAINAB RICHARDSON
Staff Writer

Though the days surrounding Sing are filled with excitement and applause, the days leading up to the ticket release are anything but.

Sing happens every spring semester at Waco Hall and is considered one of the biggest Baylor traditions with Broadway-style productions by various student organizations.

But during the Sing ticket release, students face a high-stakes system that leaves many disappointed. When the sale begins, the experience splits into two categories: the success of those who secured their tickets and the despair of those who didn't.

Faced with limited tickets, students must devise strategies to secure them. Some students use multiple devices and others get together with friends. Houston freshman James Enger set a timer on his phone to make sure he got tickets as soon as they went on sale.

"Ticket sales were very crazy because you had to wait in a queue for them, and no one expected how long that would take and whenever they did come out, there was such a rush to get in this queue and my tickets," Enger said.

But not everyone was so lucky. Some first-timers heard about the ticket sales too late. Boerne freshman Benton Warrick said he missed the boat with Sing tickets.

"I heard about it too late, and then when I was going to get one, a friend told me that they were already sold out," Warrick said.

Students performing in Sing receive three tickets to the performance without the hassle. While some students deal with the anxiety of being in a queue, others can simply rely on who they know.

Lascassas, Tenn., sophomore Molly Dutrisac got her ticket through a friend by being involved in Greek life. Though Dutrisac secured a ticket, she said the system is unfair for the student body.

"So I get tickets because I am involved in Greek life, but it is not fair for the entire student body," Dutrisac said. "I think the student body

should get first pick, because we go here."

For those who want tickets but missed the release, there is still hope. According to Plano junior Oliver Dillard, a Waco Hall Ticketing Office staff member, the ticketing office allocates a set number of tickets to administration each year. The seats are usually in the center orchestra, and many are still unclaimed by the time Sing comes along. These tickets open to the public an hour before each show, so students can come early to secure a last-minute ticket.

"Show up an hour before," Dillard said. "We usually have an extra allotment, and you can buy them in person. For the most part, everyone who shows up early can get some because it's pure dedication to show up an hour before."

How does Student Productions plan, coordinate Sing?

TOLGA SAHIN
Intern

The curtain may rise in February, but for the members of Baylor's Student Productions Committee, the work behind All-University Sing begins long before taking the stage.

By the time people enter Waco Hall, the executive producer has already spent nearly nine months coordinating themes, approving songs, reviewing costumes and relaying notes between organizations and Waco Hall staff. The process requires as much logistical precision as it does creativity.

Renee Hayes, executive student producer for Sing, said the process begins almost immediately after the previous year's show closes.

"I started this process in May," Hayes said. "We do theme and song approvals in June, so basically my whole summer is just doing that for every single group."

The theme approval process alone involves cross-referencing every submission against a list spanning, so that organizations do not repeat a theme within a four-year window. Once it is confirmed, the submissions are forwarded to a committee of Baylor faculty and staff for final approval before communicating results back to each organization's Sing chairs. Songs go into a similar review — lyrics may change during this process.

Once the school year begins, the coordination shifts to a weekly rhythm. Hayes holds a signature meeting every Wednesday to walk organizations through upcoming deadlines and explain how to fulfill requirements related to costumes, props and backdrops, all of which must receive her sign-off before appearing on stage.

"I'm basically approving everything that goes on that stage," Hayes said. "It's a big communication process."

That communication is handled in various directions. Individual acts each have a student producer who serves as a direct point of contact, meaning Hayes is rarely reaching out to performers themselves, but is instead fielding questions from producers and routing answers back through the



Courtesy of Ashlyn Kennedy

LABOR OF LOVE All-University Sing is produced annually by Baylor's Student Productions Committee, a student-led programming board that plans and coordinates several major campus events.

appropriate channels.

The weeks immediately preceding the show intensify significantly. Hayes attends every tech rehearsal at Waco Hall, often arriving around 4:30 p.m. and staying past midnight for post-production meetings where staff and advisers exchange notes on each performance. She said no show is ever truly the same, even when the acts are.

"We give notes, and then I relay those notes to the producers, and they relay them to the Sing chairs," Hayes said. "It's never really finished."

Though she is also a film major and credits her academic training for sharpening her communication and time management skills, Hayes emphasized that the show's success is never the result of any single person's effort.

"It really does take a village to do this show," Hayes said. "There's Waco Hall team, there's my adviser, there's the producers, the stagehands, the ushers, a live orchestra — there's just so many

people that make this happen. I'm just a small part in the bigger picture."

Spring senior Ashlyn Kennedy is the vice president of show experience for Student Productions. Kennedy said despite the work required, she loves Sing and the motivations behind it.

"It is such a labor of love from people all over campus and the Baylor community who have come to create such a special tradition and show," Kennedy said.

That sentiment has long resonated at every level of Student Productions. Park City, Utah, then-junior Andrea Boyce, who served as internal vice president of Student Productions in 2023, told The Lariat that the months-long investment makes the final product all the more meaningful.

"I've been working with my groups since about the end of June," Boyce said. "Sitting at open stage and watching an act that I've been helping or assisting with for a very long time come to life is the best part, hands down."

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UNSUNG HEROES from A1

ticket booth, a job that might go unnoticed by attendees but has a big impact. For weeks now, Dillard has received phone calls and emails from people hoping to secure a Sing ticket.

"Most of them are about how they didn't get a Sing ticket," Dillard said. "So they're just curious how to get one. And so we always say ... show up an hour before. We usually have an extra allotment, and you can buy them in person."

Once Sing actually starts, Dillard said the time in the ticket booth is usually spent answering questions and helping people navigate their Apple Wallets.

Despite the work that goes into each position, Herman, Davis and Dillard all pointed to others as the essential pieces in Sing's success. Herman noted the efforts of the performers themselves, Davis the dedication of professional Waco Hall staff and Dillard the

importance of stagehands. All three conveyed Sing as a tradition not marked by performances or ticket sales, but by the cooperation of all parts in one machine.

Despite the grueling hours and manual labor, the novelty and excitement of Sing haven't worn off for those who work behind the scenes. According to Herman, being a stage manager has given her an inside look and new appreciation for the commitment each performer puts into their act.

"They are not dancers, they are not performers, but they do so good," Herman said. "They put their all into it every single time that I watch them, and it's amazing to me that people that are also full-time students or maybe have a part-time job, just like me, like they have the time to go and rehearse and put on a show that is that much fun."

SING HISTORY from A1

for today were implemented then, including that any club chartered by Baylor could participate and that co-education acts were encouraged.

However, some of the other rules implemented generated strong opinions on campus. This change resulted in the traditional Thursday night show being replaced by a Saturday matinee, and groups were limited to only 12 hours a week for practice. During this time, several students, including Sing chairs, wrote letters to the editor to express their disagreement, according to the Texas Collection.

"The Lariat got people interested in things like Sing, and people read it not just for the review but for what [they] should think as well," Brinson said.

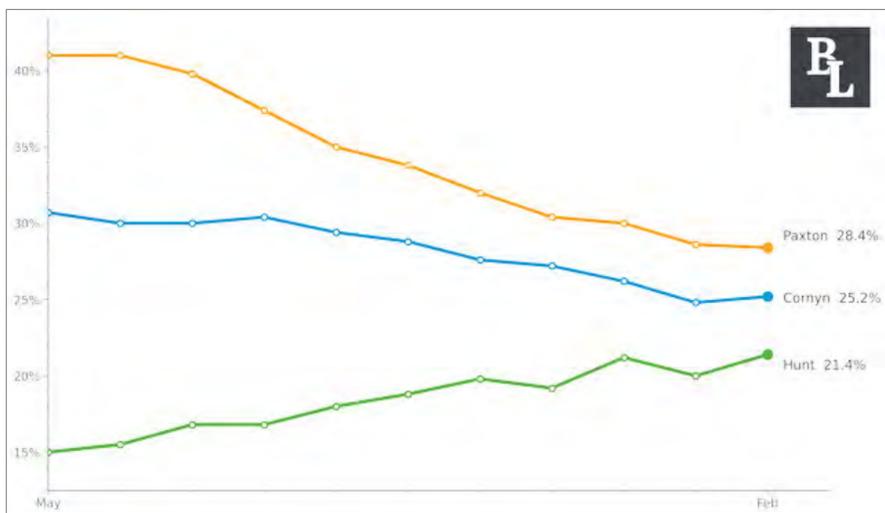
For historical traditions such as Sing, the Texas Collection archives serve as an excellent research resource, said University Archivist Dr. Elizabeth Rivera.

Rivera emphasized that for Sing records, oftentimes some of the older decades of newspaper clippings, some are not available on the Baylor Libraries website yet, making it easier for in-person research.

"That's the value of still coming back here and looking at the physical collection because not everything is digitized," Rivera said. From rule changes to controversy, The Lariat has reported and covered Sing since its introduction in 1953.

"[Roundup] and The Lariat would work in tandem to cover Sing," Brinson said. "It was an important part of every year."

VOTING INFO from C1



SEATS & DISTRICTS In the upcoming Texas election cycle, there are 16 Senate seats and over 20 battleground districts in the House.

long-standing pattern.

Baylor College Republicans President Lindsay Flanigan, a College Station senior, said the party is bracing for the historical midterm pattern, but she described the mood among Republicans in Texas and nationally as more optimistic.

"You're not wrong about the incoming party usually losing seats during midterm elections. That is not unusual — it's a pattern, no matter which party is in power," Flanigan said. "So I think it is, in keeping with the pattern of history, very likely that Republicans may lose seats, but the general feeling is hope because we want to unite the Republican Party more so than it has been in the past year or so. People are motivated to band together and make sure we retain seats at the midterms."

One of the most important races in the country is the contest for John Cornyn's U.S. Senate seat. He is facing the most serious primary challenge of his two-decade career. It is a three-way fight between Cornyn, Attorney General Ken Paxton and Rep. Wesley Hunt.

Recent public polling suggests the Republican primary for the U.S. Senate is likely to go to a runoff. None of the three candidates polled

received a majority. As election day approaches, the margins have narrowed significantly. Attorney General Ken Paxton and Senator John Cornyn are likely to face each other again in the May 26 runoff.

Compared with the Republican primary, there has been significantly less public polling in the Democratic Senate primary; therefore, fundraising is the only clear sign to look ahead. End-of-year filings show state Rep. James Talarico raised \$6.9 million in the last quarter of 2025. On the other side, U.S. Rep. Jasmine Crockett raised \$2.1 million for her Senate campaign, while transferring \$4.5 million from her House campaign account. Talarico's campaign has also raised another \$7.4 million in the first six weeks of 2026, while Crockett has not publicly posted an updated fundraising total beyond the year-end report.

Perhaps the biggest structural change on this year's ballot is the new congressional map. In August, the Texas Legislature redrew the state's 38 congressional districts at President Trump's urging, aiming to flip five Democratic-held seats to Republicans. The U.S. Supreme Court allowed the maps to be used in 2026 while legal challenges

alleging racial gerrymandering continue.

According to recent National Generic Ballot polling and Hispanic voter partisan lean calculations, planned five pickups could fall short of just one.

At the Texas State Capitol, Republicans begin the cycle holding a trifecta — 88-62 lead in the Texas House and an 18-11 advantage in the 31-seat Texas Senate, with two vacancies, and 16 seats will be up for election this year. These senate districts have voted consistently for one party in recent elections.

But Senate District 9 is now the outlier: Democrat Taylor Rehmet won a special-election runoff in late January to fill the seat in a district President Donald Trump carried by 17 points in 2024. This victory has gained national recognition on how the midterm election could turn out. Despite winning the special election, Rehmet is running again this November.

In the House, Democrats would need a net gain of 14 seats to win the chamber. There are more than 20 battleground districts. In contrast to the Senate, the House will feature numerous competitive races.

BALLOT BATTLES from C1

leader who can lead them," Eubank said.
DISTRICT JUDGE, 170TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT

The district judge hears a broad range of cases, from felony criminal cases to civil disputes.

"District Courts sit at the center of the Texas court system because they oversee the widest variety of high-stakes cases," The Texas Policy Research website reads. "Their rulings often set the stage for the legal reasoning that higher courts may later review."

"The 170th Judicial District traditionally handles civil litigation and family law matters," KWTX reported. Barrett Thomas and Gina Long are currently competing for the 170th Judicial District Judge position, as the current judge, Honorable Jim Meyer, has reached the mandatory retirement age for judges.

Barrett Thomas

Thomas hopes to bring his experience as a family law attorney to the district judge position, and claims to be the only candidate from Texas.

"Family law is toxic, and it has to change ... I've spent 15 years watching as people go inside courtrooms and say the meanest things they can about each other ... the only people that are hurt are the children," Thomas said. Thomas believes that McLennan County's residents deserve a court focused on family well-being, an area his experience in family law can inform.

"If I'm not elected, there will be no practitioner that has ever done primarily family law in McLennan County, and our children deserve that," Thomas said. "They deserve to have ... somebody that knows family law to address those psychological challenges that come up."

Gina Long

Long has extensive experience as a civil litigator with Harrison Davis Morrison Jones P.C. and as an assistant criminal district attorney for McLennan County.

"I was a prosecutor for six years right here in McLennan County, prosecuted felonies for almost the entire time I was here," Long said. "Now we're looking at courts that are behind ... Right now we have two courts of the six that are handling half of the docket, and half of that docket is criminal felony cases."

As the docket remains backlogged, those awaiting trial remain in jail, costing taxpayers money each day they remain there.

"Whatever case comes in the 170th District Court, I can hear it from day one, and I can ensure that we are being efficient, that we are saving taxpayer money and that we are making sure that justice is swift and you are all protected along with that," Long said.

Long believes in originalism, by "upholding the rule of law, not inventing one," as stated on her campaign website.

JUSTICE OF THE PEACE, PRECINCT NO. 1, PLACE 1

Students hoping to have a quick courthouse marriage would be married by a justice of the peace, with marriage ceremonies being only one of the many duties of a JP.

"The justice of the peace presides over the justice court in cases involving misdemeanors, small civil disputes, landlord/tenant disputes and more," the Texas Counties Deliver website reads.

Republican candidates Sterling Shepperd, Anthony Luevanos and Adriana Bost are running to unseat incumbent Dianne Hensley.

Sterling Shepperd

Shepperd said he is running for justice of the peace because he feels called by God to run for the position.

"I was created to serve, and I will work harder than any JP you've ever had," Shepperd said.

Shepperd served with the United States Marine Corps Reserve from 2004-2011, worked in law enforcement for about six years and is the owner of Western Roof Co., where he works as a roofing contractor.

He hopes to serve as a bridge between citizens and the court, helping those in court to better understand the process and trust the legal system.

Anthony Luevanos

Luevanos is running on a campaign built around accountability and equality for all.

"Guided by faith, integrity, and respect for human dignity, I will decide cases carefully, consistently, and without favoritism," Luevanos's campaign website reads. "My commitment is to serve this community with wisdom, compassion, and unwavering fairness."

According to his LinkedIn, Luevanos currently holds five roles as a consultant and educator at universities like the University of Oklahoma, Texas A&M University and Rice University.

With the University of Oklahoma, his current research centers around "A data science approach to leadership practices within the context of changing demographics."

Adriana Bost

Bost is utilizing her personal experience to serve the Waco community as a justice of the peace.

"Serving the whole community with fair, unbiased justice — shaped by real-world experience in mental health, victim services, and justice-involved work," reads the introduction to her campaign Facebook page.

Honorable Dianne Hensley (Incumbent)

Hensley is the current JP for precinct one, a role she has held for the past 12 years.

"For 10 years now, I've had the busiest court in the county. We did almost 2,200 new civil cases last year, and an equal number of criminal cases," Hensley said. "I have

the best staff in the country that keeps that many cases flowing. Nobody waits longer than 90 days, at most, for a hearing in my courtroom."

Hensley has made state headlines over the last few years, as she sued the Texas State Commission following a warning they issued due to her refusal to perform weddings for same-sex couples.

The Texas Supreme Court eventually ruled in Hensley's favor, stating that "it is not a violation of these canons for a judge to publicly refrain from performing a wedding ceremony based upon a sincerely held religious belief."

In December of 2025, Hensley filed a federal lawsuit asking "the courts to overturn Obergefell v. Hodges," according to The Texas Tribune.

JUSTICE OF THE PEACE, PRECINCT NO. 1, PLACE 2

This position shares the same duties as the justice of the peace position above. Will Hutson and Aubrey "Robbie" Robertson III are hoping to unseat the incumbent, the Honorable Gary "Bull" Durham.

Will Hutson

Hutson is a criminal defense attorney and amateur musician, producing musical parodies with legal advice for clients.

No publicly available information detailing Hutson's policy plans could be found at the time of publication.

Honorable Gary "Bull" Durham

Durham has brought over 37 years of law enforcement experience and hopes to continue his service as JP, a position which he was appointed to in December of 2025 following the previous justice's retirement.

"I believe in being fair and impartial to everybody that comes into the courtroom and treating everybody the same," Durham said. "I would love to continue to do the job."

Aubrey "Robbie" Robertson, III

Robertson claims to be the only attorney running for the justice of the peace position, and he says his over 15 years of experience is vital to the position.

"I'm the only attorney that is currently running for justice of the peace ... That's important because ... these dockets are huge," Robertson said.

Robertson believes the peace court should move quickly and efficiently, stating that Precinct 1 deserves an accessible, experienced JP.

"If you elect me, I'm going to do the damn job. That includes magistration, that includes all of our court dockets, civil dockets, criminal dockets, traffic dockets," Robertson said. "I'll be there, so I appreciate your vote."

Primary elections will determine which candidates advance to the general election in November. Voters can find polling locations and voting hours through the McLennan County Elections Office.

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Floor plans subject to change

First Black Baylor Law alumnus reflects on career

RYAN VASQUEZ
Reporter



Michael Heiskell, Fort Worth attorney and the first Black lawyer to graduate from Baylor Law School, has seen immense success in his 50 years of practice.

Heiskell grew up in Pelham, an all-Black farming community outside of Waco. Heiskell was constantly surrounded by people of color, which changed drastically when he arrived at Baylor, he said.

Heiskell graduated from Baylor University in 1972 and, following the advice of his political science professor Robert Williams, started at Baylor Law that fall.

"You could tell certain people resented me being there," Heiskell said.

Despite being faced with discrimination, Heiskell said his father remained his "North Star" throughout the process.

"What always resonated in my mind is what my father told me, and that is make sure that you focus on your goal, your objective, and that is to graduate and get out of there," Heiskell said. "Don't

be sidelined by others who may try to divert your attention or distract you from that purpose and goal."

With the support of his family, as well as close friend Dickie Ingram, another law student at the time, Heiskell graduated as the first African American from Baylor Law School in 1974.

"Mike is what a lawyer ought to be," said Mark Daniel, a Fort Worth criminal defense attorney and Heiskell's longtime friend.

"In a legal community — prosecutors, judges, fellow defense lawyers — he treats everybody with absolute kindness," Daniel said. "He is magnanimous to a point. His ability to handle people is really pretty neat, pretty special."

After graduating from Baylor, Heiskell began his career as an assistant criminal district attorney in Galveston, where he experienced overt discrimination, he said.

Heiskell recalls being summoned for a meeting but walking into the conference room to find a burning cross made of popsicle sticks and Styrofoam cups.

"I could have gotten upset, angry and lashed out, but I didn't," Heiskell said. "I didn't let that deter me from pursuing my job there and doing what I had to do to get that experience."

Heiskell's work led him to many prestigious positions. He was

previously chairperson of the U.S. Court Advisory Committee for the Northern District of Texas and was inducted into the American Board of Criminal Trial Lawyers. In 2023, he served as the 65th president of the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers, which is an organization of lawyers devoted to ensuring prestige and fighting inequality within the law system, according to their website.

"It's more than America; it's a success story," Daniel said. "It truly is."

Heiskell currently serves as chair of the academic committee of the Board of Regents for Baylor Law School, an achievement he takes much pride in.

"I am happy to give my all to the university because I see where they're taking us, and I want to make sure that we arrive there and continue forward to make this the best university in the world," Heiskell said.

For Heiskell, diversity is a two-way street, and while equality has come a long way, he believes that there must continue to be an influx of people of color in education.

"You don't need a uniform voice on each and every issue; you need to bring in different voices," Heiskell said. "And people of color can bring those different voices and experiences for those to hear and listen to."

BUDPS finds new channels, events to connect with students

JOSH SIATKOWSKI
Staff Writer

In a time when only the tensest interactions between civilians and law enforcement are shared across the internet, Baylor's Department of Public Safety is doing things differently. Lighthearted informational posts and staff bios fill the department's social media feed, while donut giveaways and bracelet-making workshops fill the time between patrols.

For the last six months, BUDPS has prioritized engagement with the campus community, drawing in viewers on its Instagram posts and building personal relationships at campus events. Assistant Vice President of Campus Safety and Security DJ Rodman, who was promoted last year, said he saw potential for more community engagement when he took on the role.

"We all have a story, and public safety has a really hard time telling that story," Rodman said.

It started when Rodman met individually with his staff, which encompasses about 100 employees across five departments — BUPD, Emergency Management, Physical and Technical Security, Parking Services and Global and Research Security.

"I met with all of our employees," Rodman said. "I asked them, 'Tell me your story. How did you end up here?' And we have some amazing stories."

To his surprise, staff told stories of work on ranches, on country music tours and even at rodeos in Europe. They were all stories worth sharing, but the platform wasn't there last spring.

"I think there was a gap where we have great stories, but we just don't have a storyteller," Rodman said.

But starting last fall, Westport, Conn., junior Spencer Yim has filled that gap. Yim, a community leader in Alexander Hall and the Student Regent for Baylor's Board of Regents, is serving as the first outreach and engagement intern for BUDPS. He's worked for a few hours each week, making social media videos like a one-minute "Fast Friday" interview with BUPD Chief John Kolinek and a comical street-racing PSA.

"I wanted to bring the perspective of someone who grew up not having a strong opinion about law enforcement to the department," Yim said. "Over the course of time here at Baylor, I've been able to gain more exposure to law enforcement. It's helped me to realize that not only is public safety needed, but it's integral to everything we do on campus."

Since taking over the BUDPS Instagram, Yim said engagement has increased by 400%, with some posts receiving thousands of views. For Rodman and the rest of the department, it's growth that wasn't even in the cards a few months ago.

"Spencer's been fantastic with regards to just opening doors that we didn't even consider, with regards to engaging our students and even our broader community of faculty and staff,"

Rodman said.

But the Instagram account that Yim runs is not the only BUDPS engagement initiative, nor is it the only account held by the department. BUDPS regularly holds campus events outside Speight Garage and in other locations, and Parking Services even runs an award-winning page featuring its orange traffic cone mascot, Parker.

"[Engagement] is not something new that we're doing, but something that we're that we're really trying to hit the gas on," Yim said.

With triple-digit growth rates and increased event attendance, that renewed focus on public engagement is showing.

"When you actually get to know the people behind the uniform or behind the badge, you really quickly understand that they're not doing it for themselves," Yim said. "I think the impact is tangible."

That impact, Yim said, is not just in engagement but the safety applications. The real reason for promoting the department is to make students safer on campus.

"I want every student on campus to not only follow our Instagram page, but to have on their phone the number for Baylor University Police Department saved, and to have the RAVE Guardian app downloaded," Yim said. "Because if we get every student to have those three things, then they're going to have all the resources in their phone."

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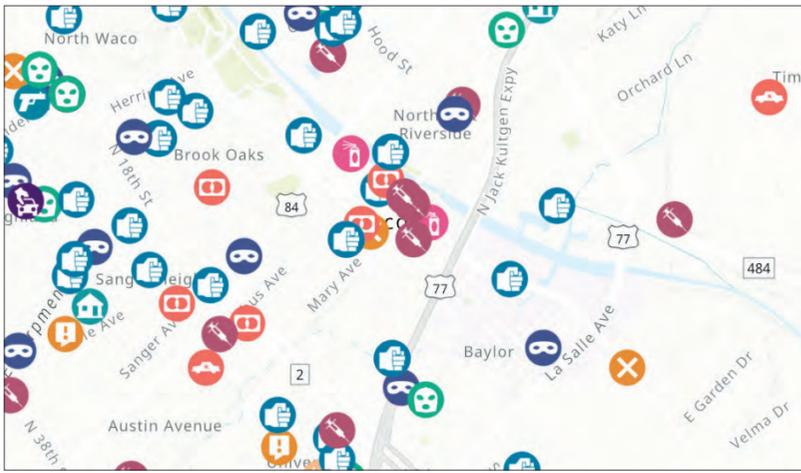


Photo courtesy of city of Waco

WHERE'S THE CRIME AT? Although it's not an exact science, the Waco Crime Map highlights areas where crimes have occurred.

Waco Crime Map helps residents stay up to date

EMMA FALK
Reporter

Waco crime decreased in 2025, but residents are still concerned with safety. The Waco Crime Map is a resource residents can use to stay up to date on recent incidents.

Crime decreased in Waco by 7% in 2025, according to Police Chief Sheryl Victorian. Despite this, crime is still a concern for Wacoans and Victorian.

"Since 2021, crimes against persons have decreased 16%, but we were 0.4% or 11 incidents higher than we were last year," Victorian said.

The crime map, though not an exact science, maps incidents to the nearest intersection for residents to note.

"The mapped locations do not depict the actual location of the incident," the map reads.

Hearing about crime updates but not knowing where to find recent information is a common struggle, which is why using the crime map can be helpful for many residents. For residents or students who are new to the area, having access to information about crimes occurring nearby is a major benefit.

Residents and police encourage Baylor students to use crime maps. Waco resident Carmen Nevarez said awareness is the first step in using the crime map.

"Always be aware of the most visited spots that you go to and look at the crime map to see what is going on in that area, and maybe you need to change where you go," Nevarez said.

Even with an overall decrease in crime, that

does not mean every area is completely safe. The crime map updates frequently, displaying crime data from the last 90 days and covering a wide range of offenses.

For college students in particular, the map is a helpful tool. Whether participating in off-campus activities at night or walking to and from destinations, awareness of surroundings can play a key role in personal safety.

League City sophomore Christopher Hoxie considers it a fundamental resource.

"I feel like it highlights areas that have a higher crime rate, and I would be more aware of the things that are going on around me, so I feel like I would use it to the best of my ability," Hoxie said.

While the crime map is beneficial in keeping people informed, it may also cause some concern for some residents who become more aware of crime in their area. Hoxie said that although having access to a crime map would help him feel prepared, it could also make him feel slightly uneasy knowing crime is occurring nearby.

"A lot of people don't know what to do in high crime areas, so I feel like including safety tips on the crime map would be beneficial to a majority of people," Hoxie said.

As crime patterns continue to change, tools such as the Waco Crime Map provide residents and students with up-to-date information about crime in their area, allowing them to plan accordingly. By staying informed and aware of their surroundings, community members can make safer decisions and better navigate daily life in Waco.

Professors help, caution students on stock market

MIA MARTINEZ
Reporter

At Baylor and around the country, conversation about stocks has shifted from stories of quick gains, sudden losses and putting investments into big companies.

According to Dr. Andrew Detzel, associate professor of finance, many students are misunderstanding what smart investing looks like for long-term gains versus gambling for short-term returns.

"I see kids piled into a small number of popular name stocks instead of building a well-diversified portfolio, which you can do just by buying a cheap index fund that tracks the market as a whole," Detzel said.

According to the New York Times, last week's stock markets tanked, making headlines as major indexes were affected. Although Detzel said to be successful in investing, it's less about stock trends and more about understanding long-term risk.

"The idea that the only way we get higher returns on average in the long run is to bear more risk, unless you have some truly spectacular edge on information or some supercomputer that nobody has," Detzel said. "In general, you shouldn't be trying to time the market [or] outsmart the market."

Detzel recommends that students who are able to go into stocks consider low-cost, diversified index funds that not only track the U.S. market but also track the broader, global market. Despite this, he advises against investing borrowed money or ignoring any high-interest credit debt.

"You know, if you've got a



Brady Harris | Photographer

STOCKED UP The stock ticker located at the top of the Financial Markets Center in the Hankamer School of Business atrium provides students with a live market overview of top stocks and relevant news.

credit card balance at all, you should not even be thinking about stocks," Detzel said.

Detzel also emphasized that students who may be nervous or are against the stock market should not entirely avoid it.

"The way to conquer that is not to go from zero to 100% stocks," Detzel said. "It's to go from 0%, open up an account, start 5% stocks, and invest in ... parts of a broad market index fund. Start there. Start small until you get comfortable. You'll start paying more attention to them. You'll start to figure out what they mean."

Arcadia, Calif., sophomore Arthur Xu started investing in stocks at 18 years old and was exposed to it through video games.

"They had a marketplace where you could keep track of the way prices could change on a daily basis," Xu said.

Many students like Xu experimented with buying stocks and monitoring the price changes.

"I've sold most of my stocks because my old strategy was I kept track of a lot," Xu

said. "So it's kind of like day trading, I guess, but just on a smaller scale, but now I don't have time to track prices all too much."

Detzel said many young student investors lose money due to the temptation of the market to make quick money rather than a long-term strategy.

Xu said he was living proof of this, explaining that he wanted to make quick money and paid the price.

"I've done some stupid stuff, and I lost around like \$600," Xu said.

Detzel said patience is key for students who are trying to navigate tuition, future expenses and financial insecurity.

"This is not an exercise in gambling," Detzel said. "If you're going to invest in stocks, be prepared to invest for a long time — years, even decades. You have to ask yourself: what is your risk appetite, and what is your time horizon? It's about being honest with yourself and figuring out your situation and your motivation for wanting to invest at all."



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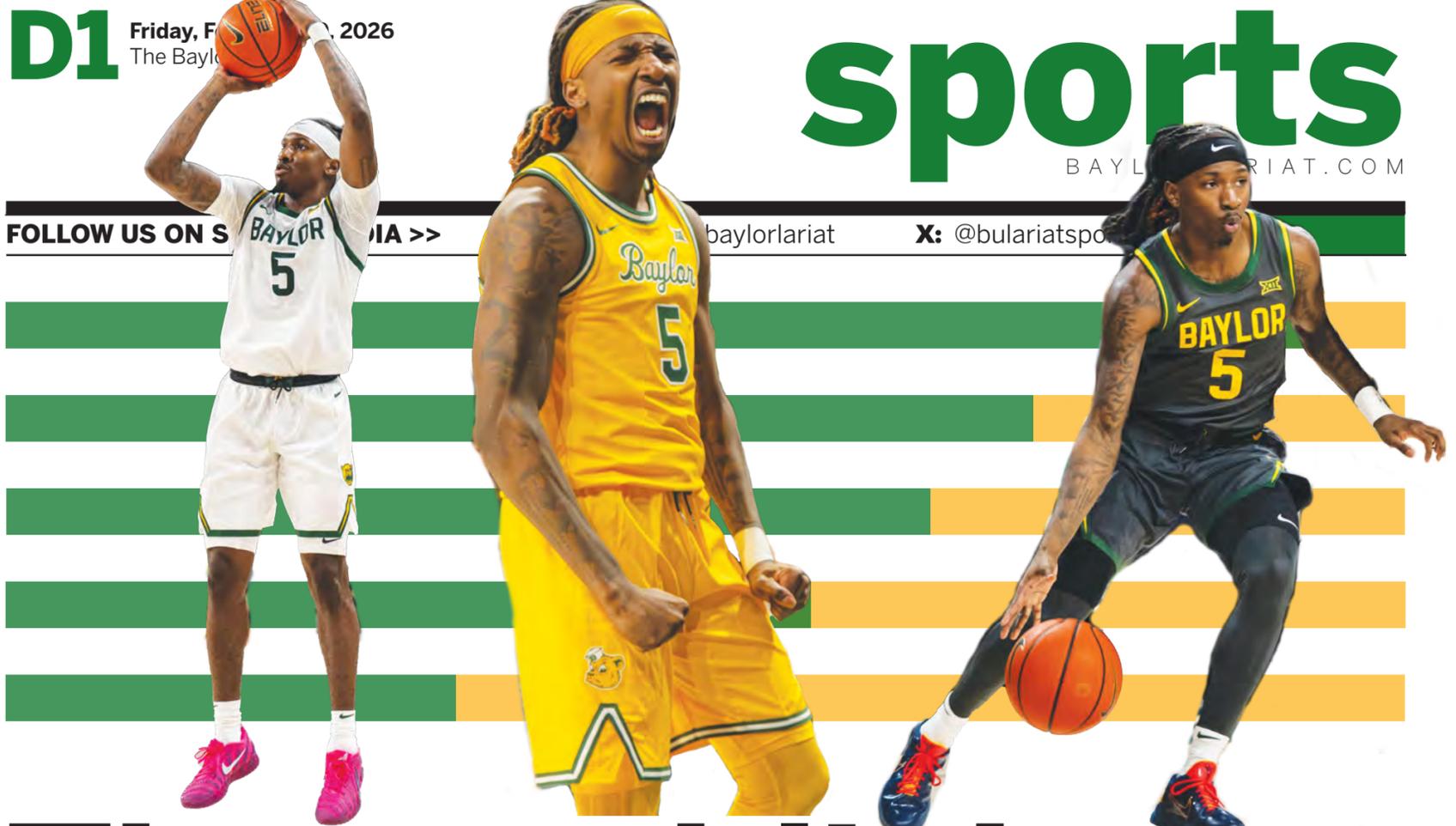
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The ramblin' man

Obi Agbim has played for 5 teams in 6 years. His journey is a 'real-life testimony.'

JACKSON POSEY
Sports Editor

It was 5:43 a.m. The city, hushed by a global pandemic and shut in by the January frost, was still asleep. Aside from the distant rush of cars on Auraria Parkway, the only sound within earshot was 17-year-old Obi Agbim's soft footsteps crunching on the still-falling snow.

Right, left. Right, left. One foot in front of the other.

The freshman trudging five blocks to basketball practice had no idea what would come next.

"Man, it's really just a real-life testimony," said Agbim, now the starting point guard at Baylor. "Going to one of the lowest levels of college basketball, and just somehow finding a way to make it up, it can't happen on my own. It's all just on faith."

"From day one, I knew I was capable. It was just whether or not I would ever get the opportunity."

Today, Agbim is playing at his fifth school in the past six years, including two Division II programs and a junior college. He's benefitted from a spree of major NCAA rule changes in recent years: extra eligibility for athletes that played during the COVID-19 pandemic, JUCO seasons not counting against eligibility, unlimited free transfers, the advent of NIL payments and the pay-to-play ramifications of the House settlement.

It all started at Metro State, a Division II school in Denver. Rooming with a high school teammate just 20 minutes from home, Agbim's experience should've felt warm and familiar. Instead, the atmosphere around town was eerie.

Pandemic-era restrictions turned campus to a ghost town. Practice time was limited. Players were forced to wear restrictive masks on the court, making everyone look like, in his

words, "Bane in Batman." The world turned upside down in 2020, and Agbim's life flipped with it.

"It was a weird season," Agbim said. "Imagine you're in high school, going to experience college, and you're just thinking, 'Oh, I need to get all this for the room,' or 'Oh, there's going to be a whole bunch of classes' — [but there] was nobody on campus. Literally nobody."

Much of his freshman season was spent with Christian Speller, a high school teammate also recruited by Metro State. The pair stayed up late in a revamped hotel-turned-dorm room, playing Call of Duty and listening to what Agbim's roommate called "good music" — mostly a mix of Drake and Chief Keef. ("Obi is probably Chief Keef's No. 1 fan," Speller said, laughing.)

"Seeing what he's been able to accomplish, and his basketball ability now, it's amazing that everyone else finally gets to see it," said Speller, who later transferred to play basketball and football at Colorado Mesa. "Seeing him be able to be around in a spotlight where his basketball ability is broadcast and is recognized, it's special."

During one high school practice, the pair butted heads: Agbim spun out of control on a drive and konked his teammate on the noggin. Speller woke up a minute later with a nasty knot and a splitting headache.

Speller speaks highly of Agbim's basketball talent, but he's more friend than teammate. And what are friends for if not to keep each other humble?

"He'll deny it, but I was dunking on him back in the day," Speller said. "I was. He'll say no, but we both know."

After playing in half the Roadrunners' games as a freshman, Agbim transferred down to Northeastern Junior College, a "dog-eat-dog world" where he battled



Brady Harris | Photographer

OFF TO THE RACES Fifth-year guard Obi Agbim drives past Texas Tech's Tyreee Bryan during the Bears' 92-73 loss to the Red Raiders on Jan. 20.

injuries and faced plenty of adversity. It was a decision that thrust him out of his comfort zone and into the heat of battle.

And he loved every second of it.

"It was one of the best decisions of my life to go JUCO, see what it feels like to just have fun playing basketball again," Agbim said. "I feel like a lot of people sleep on JUCO. And it's different now, because NIL's a thing now. But if there wasn't NIL, and JUCO was four years, it'd be hard for me [to leave]. I'd like to stay at JUCO a long time, it was so fun."

Every day was competition, featuring grand battles between Division I pushbacks and ambitious players from lower levels. With little incentive to develop players, junior college coaches experiment with lineups to find the best

possible combinations. With rosters sometimes stretching beyond 40 names, it can be difficult to stand out from the crowd.

Junior colleges don't have limited practice hours the way Division I teams do. A coach can keep players in the gym for as long as he wants "until he gets what he wants." The trials brought the team closer off the court. Agbim recalls game nights, group classes and an ill-fated kickball tournament that ended in verbal sparring.

When the season came to a close, Agbim spurned Division I offers for a guaranteed role at Division II Fort Lewis.

"I wanted to go D1, but I felt like Ty [Danielson]'s plan was just so intriguing," Agbim said. "I was just so invested into it, so I kind of just took

a leap of faith there."

Danielson, the associate head coach, wanted to build the boat out of Obi Agbim. It worked to perfection. The Skyhawks won the RMAC regular-season and tournament championships with Agbim starring as the sixth man.

For the first time, Agbim stuck around for an encore. He captained the offense from the spotlight, averaging 15.5 points, 4.0 rebounds and 2.9 assists per game on 44.3/35.5/83.6 shooting splits in his second season. The Skyhawks won another conference tournament title and finished the two-year run 58-8.

"Imagine you're in high school, [and] the two years that you're actually playing varsity, you're winning. You're just winning. And then the first two years of college, you lose," said Agbim, who led Rangeview High School to a state championship in 2019 and a 26-0 record in 2020 before the COVID-19 shutdowns. "Then you get to Fort Lewis, and somehow you start winning again. That winning culture — you get a little greedy at winning."

He almost left Fort Lewis after the first season, but weeks of reflection brought him back. It's hard being a nomad. The moving takes a toll.

"Just thinking really deeply whether or not you want to go and start over, build your relationships again, build the trust again," Agbim said. "It was a really thoughtful process, but I thank God just for making that decision."

A one-year stint at Wyoming culminated a lifetime of Division I hoop dreams. It also ended with the hardest goodbye yet.

"I'm not going to lie to you, it was hard," Agbim said. "When you get that type of relationship with a coaching staff, and the year was so

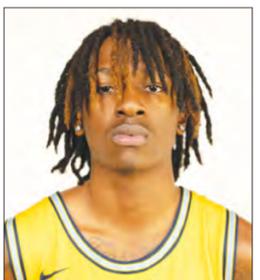
OBI'S JOURNEY >> D7



Agbim in '20-21 | Photo courtesy of MSU Denver Athletics



Agbim in '21-22 | Photo courtesy of Northeastern JC Athletics



Agbim in '22-23 | Photo courtesy of Fort Lewis College Athletics



Agbim in '23-24 | Photo courtesy of Fort Lewis College Athletics



Agbim in '24-25 | Photo courtesy of Wyoming Athletics



Agbim in '25-26 | Photo courtesy of Baylor Athletics

Undefeated baseball turns to Round Rock

MARISSA ESSENBURG
Sports Writer

Coming off a second-straight opening weekend sweep, Baylor baseball leaves Magnolia field for the first time this season riding an undefeated start and early momentum under fourth-year head coach Mitch Thompson.

The Bears (4-0) now head to the Round Rock Classic at Dell Diamond for their first neutral-site test of the season, squaring off against No. 11 Oregon State, No. 20 Southern Miss and Purdue in a loaded four-team field for its toughest challenge yet.

While the opening stretch highlighted depth across a lineup featuring 17

newcomers, it was redshirt senior first baseman Tyce Armstrong who delivered history, becoming just the second player in NCAA history to hit three grand slams in a single game in Friday's opener against New Mexico State.

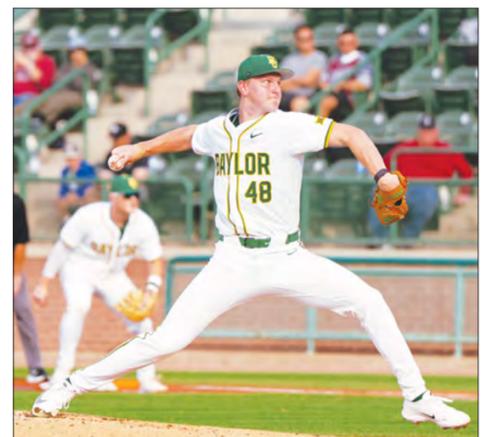
Still a month out from Big 12 competition, the Bears will keep their nonconference slate moving against Oregon State (3-1). The Beavers are fresh off completing a 10th-inning walk-off win over Michigan to avenge a loss in their season opener.

After going 1-2 in Omaha to cap their 2025 campaign, including a Corvallis Super Regional win over Florida State, the Beavers enter 2026 as one of the nation's elite programs. Backed by a strong returning core

of pitchers, Oregon State has been ranked as high as No. 7 in the preseason and remains firmly slotted inside the top 15 across major polls.

Despite losing several key contributors to the draft and transfer portal, Oregon State, like Baylor, returns a strong core, including five of its top 10 innings leaders from a year ago. Offensively, the Beavers bring back veterans in catcher Jacob Galloway, first baseman Jacob Krieg and second baseman AJ Singer, who anchors the infield.

With defensive precision and a hefty strikeout bag, Oregon State shrinks the margin for error. For Baylor, that means



Brady Harris | Photographer

ROCKET MAN Redshirt junior pitcher Lucas Davenport launches a pitch during a win over New Mexico State.

BASEBALL >> D7

Interim golf coach prepares to lead team in spring campaign

DYLAN FINK
Sports Writer

Baylor golf has a new leader at its forefront seeking to find the right rhythm for the program to succeed across the remaining spring campaign.

Following the January retirement of longtime coaching legend Mike McGraw, former Baylor assistant coach Ryan Murphy was moved up to the role of interim head coach. Murphy's promotion came after McGraw's decision to step down from the program to help his wife, Pam, with her health issues.

"Sometime late in the fall, Coach kind of brushed the topic with me," Murphy said. "It's a very bittersweet moment for me because I knew he needed more time with Pam, but also it is a great opportunity for me."

Murphy now sits with big shoes to fill in front of him. McGraw is widely regarded across the golfing world as one of the best collegiate coaches in the country, winning three national championships across a coaching career that spanned more than 20 years.

"My first feeling was kind of sadness," Murphy said. "[McGraw] is not your normal golf coach, this guy is one of one. He's a Hall of Fame coach and a Hall of Fame person. I guess later on I felt the excitement of the opportunity."

Looking ahead of his new role, Murphy has a tight-knit group of people supporting him in his corner.

"My inner circle is not really big," Murphy said. "It's probably only 10 to 15 people I would say I'm really close with, but they're all excited for me and excited for the opportunity that's in front of me. I've received a lot of well-wishes from them all."

Murphy joined the Baylor staff last January after serving for 10 years as the head women's golf coach at Texas. The five-time Big 12 champion now stands ahead of his first men's head coaching role since 2008 at Division II St. Edward's.

Murphy left St. Edward's in 2008 to become an assistant for Texas' men's team. While serving in that position, Murphy had the opportunity to coach PGA stars and Masters winners Jordan Spieth and Scottie Scheffler. In 2013, Murphy's dedication paid off, as he was named the Jan Strickland Assistant Coach of the Year, an award given to the nation's top assistant coach.

"All your past experiences make you the coach that you are," Murphy said. "You're the culmination of all those ups, downs, successes and all those failures. I've had my share at each place that I've coached ... All of them are learning experiences for sure."

The Bears did not reach their expected heights in the fall semester, only achieving one top-five finish as a team, but Murphy has Baylor's full trust to turn things around this spring.

"I took guidance from [Baylor athletic director] Doug McNamee," Murphy said. "He told me two things. He said, 'You're the CEO of your program,' and 'We're here to serve the mission of the university.' I believe in those two things."

Murphy coached his first tournament as Baylor's head coach the second weekend of February, leading the Bears to a top-five finish at the Bentwater Collegiate in Montgomery.

"We finished fifth out of 14 and honestly that was not what we wanted going there," Murphy said. "There were some positives and that's what we will work on. You take those and you build on them. I'm under the impression you come back and you get right the areas that hurt you the most."

Players have made it clear that they are behind Murphy this spring, as a bid to the NCAA Championship tournament is still on the table for the Bears.

"Yeah, whenever there is transition or change it takes some time to adapt," senior Jonas Appel said. "It's been really smooth. I mean, we've had Coach Murphy for, I think, a little over a year now, and so he's been great ... I think there's a lot of great opportunities that we have this spring and a lot of goals to accomplish."

Murphy's goal for the team this spring is not strictly result-focused, as he echoes McGraw's "better than I found it" sentiment and seeks to lead his players to personal improvement and growth.

"Everybody pays attention to results and coaches are not exempt from that," Murphy said. "If I'm really doing my job well, I am looking at personal improvement. I'll know I did my job if each of the nine guys improve in some way ... We try to focus our attention on things we can control and if we do that this semester, I would call that a success."

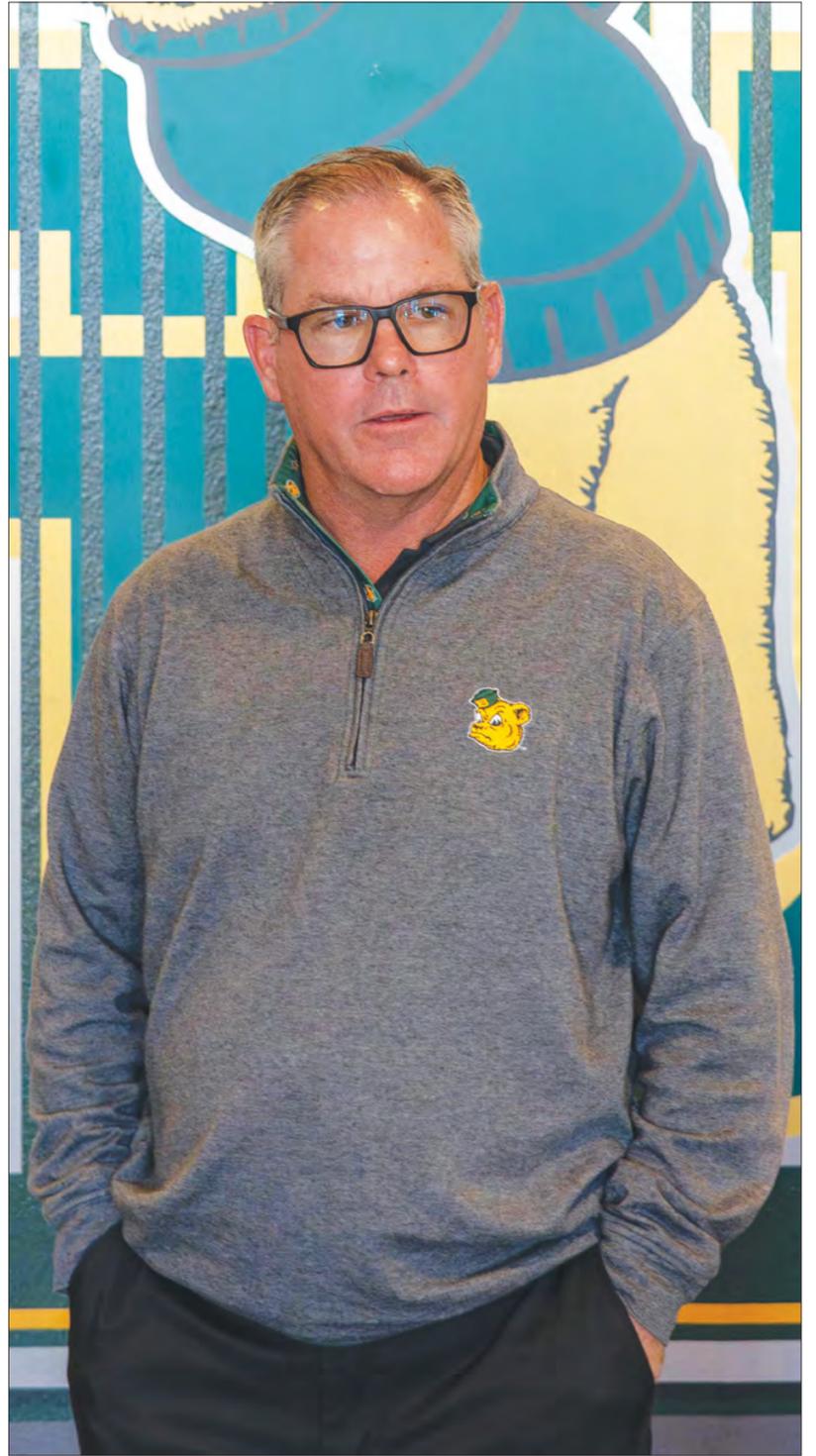
Having been in the Waco community for a little over a year now, Murphy and his family are now willing to call Baylor a home.

"I grew up in a small town myself, so being in Waco reminds me of my upbringing," Murphy said. "The thought of getting to raise my two boys here, should the opportunity come, is really appealing to me."

Currently serving as just the interim head coach, Murphy voiced his willingness to take over the role full-time should the opportunity arise.

"No question, I would love to be a part of this program going forward," Murphy said. "Being alongside Coach McGraw for a year was really terrific. It was only a year, but it was kind of the highlight of my career ... I learned a lot of great things from him, and I'm sure that will continue as I've got him on speed dial."

Murphy will lead the Bears over the border for their next tournament March 1-3 in Los Cabos, Mexico, at the Cabo Collegiate tournament.



Dylan Fink | Sports Writer

TAKING THE REINS Following the retirement of Mike McGraw, Ryan Murphy has taken the reins of interim coach for the Baylor men's golf team.

Badenhorst, Koenig's childhood friendship brings pair closer

JEFFREY COHEN
Sports Writer

Playing in the same tournament was a common occurrence for Devin Badenhorst and Luc Koenig growing up in South Africa.

"I was staying at Devin's house for a tournament in Johannesburg. And of course, the way the universe works is that we draw each other first round at the tournament," said Koenig, who now plays alongside Badenhorst at Baylor. "We arrived to the tournament late in the morning and we were a bit late, and we had, like, the quickest warmup ever."

When they were matched up against each other in the first round of a tournament, tensions flared between the two competitive tennis players. Multiple disagreements put them on edge, not even talking to each other afterward.

"Devin ends up beating me, but there were a lot of tight calls from him, a lot of tight calls from me," Koenig said. "We ended up getting very mad at each other, and the drive on the way home was dead silent."

Matches like this prove how strong the friendship had grown between the pair of tennis players.

"We've always been close enough to get over it," Koenig said. "Straight back to training after that, it was all done a day later."

While the drive to win got the best of them at times, it ultimately made them better tennis players. They had multiple chances to improve against each other, as they often met at the end of tournaments as two of the top players in the country.

"We played each other so much growing up because we were two of the best juniors in South Africa," Badenhorst said. "It's tough to do that against your best friend, but it was a good experience."

Like siblings, both players always wanted to come out on top. That desire to say one is better than the other made them hit a little harder and play a little faster.

"I didn't want to lose to him, he didn't want to lose to me. It was a little bit of bragging rights," Koenig said. "Our best tennis would come out when we played each other."

Those ties held true when Koenig joined Baylor before the spring 2023 season. While he got his first taste of college tennis with a 9-8 singles record and 12-12 in doubles, Koenig knew he had to get Badenhorst on board.

"He got to college a year before me, and he told me how good Baylor was," said Badenhorst, now a junior. "I made the decision to come to Baylor too, and since then, [we've] been best friends at college."

The pair have compiled a 13-9 doubles record together for the Bears. They have grown even closer now in their third season alongside each other in Waco.

One of the more memorable moments between the duo came in Baylor's upset win over No. 3 Wake Forest on Saturday.

"To share this experience with Devin, us clinching the match against Wake Forest, me grinding it out 7-6 and a third [set], and him finishing just after me," Koenig said. "It's going to be really special to carry on doing things like that this season with him."

After dropping the first two points, the Bears were trying to keep the match alive. With a singles win from junior Connor Van Schalkwyk and senior Zsombor Velcz, the match was even. It was up to Koenig and Badenhorst to finish the comeback.

Both were grinding out decisive third sets that went to a tiebreaker. Koenig came out on top on Court Five 1-6, 7-5, 7-6 (3), leaving all eyes on Court One.

Badenhorst finished the improbable victory with a 3-6, 6-4, 7-6 (5) victory and was enveloped by his cheering teammates.

That moment captured Badenhorst and Koenig's relationship on the court. It showed them the privilege of competing alongside each other and their team.

"When you start traveling by yourself, you realize how valuable it is to be on a team," Badenhorst said. "Especially if you have your best friend with you, it makes it even more valuable and even more priceless."



Lariat file photo

POWER DUO Luc Koenig (left) and Devin Badenhorst (right) high-five after a successful serve during Baylor men's tennis' Big 12 quarterfinal 4-0 win over Arizona State on April 18, 2025, at the Hurd Tennis Center.



Photo courtesy of Baylor Athletics

RECORD BREAKER Junior hurdler Demario Prince set program record with a 13.18 mark in the 110-meter hurdles. The previous record had been held since 1996.



Photo courtesy of Baylor Athletics

NEW HEIGHTS Junior pole vaulter Molly Haywood recorded the third 15-foot indoor vault in Baylor track and field history at the Ted Nelson Invitational in College Station.

Baylor track and field gets in position for conference run

MARISSA ESSENBERG
Sports Writer

One month and five meets into the indoor season, Baylor track and field has produced a record-setting start to 2026, piling up titles, beating PRs and positioning multiple event groups in Big 12 title contention.

What began as an early-season proving ground has quickly become a measuring stick against conference competition. With performances tightening and lineups solidifying, the Bears now enter the final stretch of the indoor calendar, where consistency will define their conference ceiling.

Opening the season at the Corky Classic in Lubbock, the Bears saw immediate results. Senior Tiriah Kelley ran 22.56 seconds to win the 200 meters, breaking her own school record and setting the meet record.

On the men's side, freshman Landon

Freeman cleared 2.15 meters (7-0 ½) in the high jump, becoming the program's first 7-foot clearance since 2000. He finished fifth in a competitive field, with the mark standing as the top height by a Baylor jumper in over two decades.

The following weekend at the Ted Nelson Invitational in College Station, Baylor continued to stack high marks across events. Junior pole vaulter Molly Haywood entered competition at 14-0 and went on to clear 15-0, recording the third 15-foot indoor clearance in program history. The Bears totaled 27 top-eight finishes over the two-day meet, adding scoring depth across field and track events.

Kelley advanced through the rounds in the 60 meters, qualifying fastest before clocking 7.34 to finish second in the final. In the field, sophomore Janae De Gannes returned to competition and hit a runner-up mark in the long jump, securing second place in her first

meet back from a fall hamstring injury.

Momentum carried into the DeLoss Dodds Invitational in Manhattan, Kan., where junior Demario Prince posted the top qualifying time in the 60-meter hurdles before running 7.59 in the final to reset the meet record and rank among the fastest in the nation this season.

"I wasn't really surprised about the time," head coach Michael Ford said. "He executed the race right."

Baylor also secured wins in the men's 600-yard run and 4x400 relay, closing the meet in 3:08.25. Freshman Success Oyibu captured the 200-meter title in her collegiate debut. Runner-up finishes from Haywood and Abbas Ali added to the team's steady production.

That stretch continued at the Carolina Classic in Columbia, S.C., where Prince advanced through prelims and semifinals before clocking 7.62 to win his second consecutive

60-meter hurdles title.

Baylor added five more event victories, including sweeps of the men's and women's 4x400-meter relays to close the meet. Kelley remained unbeaten in the 200 meters and Freeman cleared for the win in the high jump to secure his first collegiate title.

"It was definitely a big improvement from last week to this week," Ford said. "They still need to drop some more, but it was progress."

Back in Lubbock following consecutive out-of-state meets, Baylor added more top finishes across the board at the Jarvis Scott Open. Senior Tenly Kuhn and juniors Alencia Lentz and Haywood combined for three of the top five clearances in the pole vault on Friday's opening day, while both the men's and women's 4x400-meter relay squads finished fourth.

With no regular-season meets remaining, Baylor turns to the Big 12 Indoor Championships with hopes to build on its record-setting season.

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The man who made history

The record was 'unbreakable.'
Enter Tyce Armstrong.

JEFFREY COHEN
Sports Writer

It was the second meeting between Baylor and UT Arlington in the 2025 season. The Bears had gotten the best of Mavericks in their previous meeting, dominating 13-4. But that mid-April day would leave a lasting impression for Tyce Armstrong.

The All-WAC Second Team designated hitter did not hold back at the plate. He went 3-for-4 with a home run and double in a 10-inning, 9-8 loss to Baylor.

"Last year we played him, and he tore us up at UTA," redshirt junior right-handed pitcher Lucas Davenport said. "It's good to see him on our side this year."

Despite being a thorn in the Bears' side, Armstrong was also tied to the program through connections with three Baylor staffers.

"Darin Thomas, who's our director of ops, was my head coach at UT Arlington my freshman year," Armstrong said. "That summer I played with [assistant coach Jim] Blair ... and I got recruited by [Mitch] Thompson when I was at summer ball."

Brady Harris | Photographer

Knowing the coaches and having played at Baylor Ballpark, the choice for Armstrong's destination seemed clear.

"This is a historic university, and I always enjoyed playing here, playing against them," Armstrong said. "Never had a problem with them, even playing against them."

His love and drive for the game started at a young age, when he watched his brother play little league baseball and his sister play softball. "I was always at his games watching him," Armstrong said.

He hails from a family of athletes. His father, Ken Armstrong, is a two-time Olympic diver and a member of the University of Texas Swimming and Diving Hall of Fame. His mother, Patty, was also a national champion diver at Texas.

Further up the family tree, though, the Armstrongs are ballplayers. Family history on the diamond is what led Armstrong's parents to keep him on the dirt and not in the water.

"My grandpa was a baseball player, so my dad always wanted me to play," Armstrong said. "I grew up and really liked the sport." Armstrong's hard work paid off in college. He hit .297 in three seasons at UT Arlington with a career-high 12 home runs in

2025, but his biggest performance was still in front of him.

In his Baylor debut, Armstrong became the second player in college baseball history to smash three grand slams in a single game, lifting the Bears over New Mexico State 15-2 on Feb. 13. He went viral with posts from MLB and ESPN highlighting his historic debut.

Armstrong was in awe of what he did like the rest of the baseball world, but he knew this was only the beginning of his time in Waco. He emphasized the need to go back out the next day and play his game.

"We worked all fall and all early spring on just getting our swings right," Armstrong said. "I had an amazing game and I'm so grateful for that opportunity, but after that, you just got to trust what you worked on, trust your ability and and just play the game."

Head coach Mitch Thompson has the same mindset. After a historic outpouring, Armstrong and the Baylor faithful will have to reset their expectations.

"I want him to enjoy the heck out of it tonight, show back up tomorrow, and everybody not be disappointed when he gets a single tomorrow," Thompson said after Armstrong's three-grand slam performance. "Let's get back in it and let's have another day and let's keep moving on."

Thompson knew what he was going to get out of Armstrong when he recruited him. Armstrong collected 17 home runs and

drove in 87 runs in his time with the Mavericks. Along with his talent, Thompson wanted a guy that could help guide a young roster.

"He's got power, we know he had power, and he brings experience," Thompson said. "He's such a great kid, he works hard, he's a good mentor to the young guys."

Armstrong's final ride in college seems to be going according to plan. He quickly formed bonds with his teammates, saying they have already become "some of my best friends."

"This is my last year at college baseball, and this team has been awesome to me," Armstrong said. "From day one, there wasn't a single problem all fall."

Armstrong picked up four major honors during his first week in the green and gold. He was named Big 12 Newcomer of the Week, Perfect Game National Player of the Week, first baseman for Baseball America's National Team of the Week and NCBWA Co-National Hitter of the Week following his performance against New Mexico State.

One game, three grand slams.
History on the Brazos.

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Injury bug bites

Men's basketball struggles with depth in Big 12 play

DYLAN FINK
Sports Writer

The injury bug has been a regular visitor to Baylor basketball the past few seasons.

On Monday afternoon, head coach Scott Drew announced that fifth-year guard JJ White has been ruled out for the remainder of the season with a stress fracture in his foot. The Omaha transfer has not played since a Nov. 24 win against Creighton.

"He's tried to come back," Drew said. "It looks like he won't be able to return this year, but that's not by lack of effort."

White's shutdown marks the third Baylor player to suffer a season-ending injury this year, and the ninth since the program's 2021 national championship.

Along with White, freshman forward Maikcol Perez was ruled out for the season in September with an ACL tear. Junior center Juslin Bodo Bodo showed up to fall practice with a forearm injury that has kept the High Point transfer off the court as well this season. Senior wing Dan Skillings Jr., who has been listed as day-to-day for multiple weeks with a knee injury, played 21 minutes in Tuesday's loss to Kansas State. It was his first game since January.

The inability to escape untimely injuries has consistently dwindled the green and gold's depth in recent seasons.

"Players are so sport-specific nowadays," Drew said. "They grow up playing one sport year-round, and with the wear and tear on those muscles, there actually was predicted that there would be more injuries in sports. Especially versus back in our day where you played three, four, five different sports."



Brady Harris | Photographer

BANGED UP BALLERS Fifth-year guard JJ White plays defense at the top of the key in the Bears' 96-81 win against UTRGV on Nov. 8 in Foster Pavilion.

Sport specialization has been a noted cause of an increase in tendon and ligament injuries across the basketball world. The NBA saw a 190% increase in ligament-related injuries in 2025, per data collected by Forbes.

Still, other Division I programs have managed to avoid such high numbers of injuries and depth issues. While basketball-related injuries are on the rise worldwide, the injury bug seems to have securely cemented itself in Waco lately.

"I think part of it is medical

technology," Drew said. "I'm sure if they put any of us under everything we have, they'd find something wrong with us."

Medical technology in the sports world has grown rapidly in the past decade. Now, high level programs have wearable sensors and 3D scans that allow medical staff to assess in real time the effects of acceleration forces, jump counts, fatigue levels and lateral stress, and how they each affect soft-tissue injury risk.

While the benefit of advanced medical technology has helped

keep players safe and healthy, there is a rising question in how risk assessment has discouraged old-school mentalities of playing through smaller injuries.

"This game honors toughness," Boston Celtics general manager Brad Stevens said in a 2018 interview. "The more you understand basketball you'll start to see that just again and again."

The rising toll of injuries for Baylor has affected the program's ceiling of success recently as depth has been a recurring issue for the Bears. This

season, with three rotation players out for the season and a fourth listed as day-to-day, Drew has been forced to lead his team into against the gauntlet of the Big 12 with a rotation of seven or eight players.

"I'm young so I think I should be able to play 40 minutes," redshirt sophomore guard Cameron Carr said. "It's been a little challenging. You always want to step on the court with your friends and you never want to see them hurt, so that's always the challenging piece."

Drew noted how the seemingly random cause of injuries has been a recurring frustration this season, as players' health was repeatedly out of the program's hands.

"Maikcol Perez just gets here and tears [his ACL] in the first week, so it's not like we wore him down," Drew said. "Bodo gets injured before he got here, so those are two of them. Now JJ gets a stress fracture ... That's one that happened on our watch. Dan went down, and unfortunately that can happen at any time."

In a conference praised for its depth and high-octane competition, the Bears have yet to find their footing. Baylor (13-12, 3-9 Big 12) has witnessed its worst conference record since 2005, with a handful of close losses stinging with noticeable fatigue from lack of depth.

"Things are different with NIL and the portal," Drew said. "Teams aren't as deep as they once were. If you get a couple injuries, that really does affect you."

The Bears are currently 14th in the Big 12 and look like a long shot for the NCAA tournament.

Baylor will face off against Arizona State (14-12, 5-8 Big 12) at 3 p.m. Saturday at Foster Pavilion. The game will be broadcast on ESPN2.



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BASEBALL from D1

pitch strikes, clean defense and forcing the Beavers to string hits together rather than capitalizing on free passes.

A 75-degree Saturday and clear Texas skies — perfect weather to play ball — greet the Bears in Round Rock for a 1 p.m. first pitch in game two against Purdue.

The Boilermakers (2-2) enter the spring under seventh-year head coach Greg Goff, coming off a 31-23 overall season in 2025 and a mid-February trip to Sugar Land, where they opened with a 2-1 series win over Portland behind a bullpen rebound after an early loss.

While Purdue wasn't projected among the Big Ten's top six teams, nobody gets written off this early in the season. For Baylor, it starts with controlling the tempo from the first pitch. That means pounding the strike zone and forcing Purdue to earn every 90 feet, every inning. Offensively, it's about situational baseball — moving runners, winning deep-count at-bats and cashing in when traffic builds.

The tournament caps Sunday as the Bears meet Southern Miss (3-1) at 3 p.m., marking the first meeting between the two programs in 23 years. The last time they faced off, Baylor defeated the then-No. 12 Golden Eagles in back-to-back games during the Hattiesburg Regional, later sending the Bears to the second

Super Regional in program history.

Two decades later, the Golden Eagles sit among the nation's best at No. 18 and claim one of college baseball's most consistent programs, extending a run of success mounted by nine consecutive 40-win seasons and 21 all-time NCAA Regional appearances.

Posting a 47-16 record last season and hosting a regional before falling at home, Southern Miss has carried that momentum into 2026 with high preseason expectations.

The Golden Eagles return a roster that blends experienced veterans with newcomers and offseason additions to bolster depth. On the mound, senior right-hander and preseason All-Sun Belt selection Colby Allen anchors the rotation, while catcher Tucker Stockman and outfielder Ben Higdon — also preseason all-conference selections — steady the lineup.

Entering Sunday as the only unbeaten club in the field after a 14-4 win over Texas State on Tuesday, the Bears will aim to finish the weekend unscathed before heading back up I-35 on Sunday.

The Bears open the weekend against Oregon State at 6 p.m. Friday at Dell Diamond, setting the tone for a three-game stretch in Round Rock. All three games will be streamed on D1Baseball.com.



Caleb Garcia | Photographer

RUNNING WILD Sophomore infielder Pearson Riebock is embraced by teammates after he scored on a wild pitch on in Baylor's 14-4 win over Texas State on Tuesday at Baylor Ballpark.



Brady Harris | Photographer

RUNNING POINT Fifth year guard Obi Agbim dribbles the ball up the court in Baylor's 92-73 loss to No. 12 Texas Tech on Jan. 20 at Foster Pavilion.

OBI'S JOURNEY from D1

good for you, why leave it?"

Baylor had competitive advantages — more NIL money, greater TV exposure, the opportunity to play at the highest level. But it was draining to leave another place that felt like home.

Agbim immediately made his presence known in Waco, taking on a leadership role for a transfer-heavy team with no returning players. He scored 16 points and drained four 3-pointers in the Bears' season-opening win over UTRGV.

"I thought Obi was a lot more aggressive than he was in the first two scrimmages, which was great to see," head coach Scott Drew said after the game. "He's adjusting, too, because he's never really had a season at this level being a point guard."

While adjusting to the reins, Agbim made a series of highlight-reel plays in transition. The typically reserved guard keeps untapped athleticism in his back pocket.

"We've seen him do some crazy things in practice," senior wing Dan Skillings Jr. said in November after Agbim blocked a dunk in the open court. "He doesn't want to bring them out in games; he wants to just lay it up. I don't get it."

Amid a series of injuries that have

decimated the Bears' depth, Agbim has stepped into an even larger role. He played all 40 minutes in a Feb. 7 road loss to Iowa State and leads the team in assists, despite fitting more cleanly into a combo guard role. Somehow, the overlooked high schooler has become the captain of a top-30 offense in America.

Right, left. Right, left. One foot in front of the other.

One more step in an inexplicable journey. "I wish I could have seen it coming," Agbim said. "I don't think you could really script this happening, or any of the schools ... [It's] a testimony. I can't really look in the mirror and be like, 'Oh yeah, I made all this happen, I made all these opportunities come to the table.'"

"Everything happens for a reason. I'm definitely thankful to God for the way it happened, and how he's still making a lot of miracles happen for me now."

Five blocks from his car, glittered with snowflakes, Agbim slows to a stop in front of the door. He can feel the warmth glowing from inside the gym, hear the chatter and clamor of teammates getting early shots up. It's been a long journey. But he's finally home.

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