

**Sports | 4-5**  
**Ferrell Center**  
Top five moments of BU basketball in the Ferrell



**Sports | 6**  
Build your own bracket and compete with the Lariat



**Sports | 6**  
**BIG 12**  
Toughest conference to play in yet?

# MARCH MADNESS



## Baylor’s Keyonte George, Darianna Littlepage-Buggs sweep Big 12 Freshman of the Year titles

**MICHAEL HAAG**  
Sports Editor

Baylor basketball’s freshman guard Keyonte George and freshman forward Darianna Littlepage-Buggs were both thrown into more than just a new campus and a brand new green and gold jersey.

George and Littlepage-Buggs had to deal with an immediate target on their backs after they

were voted as the preseason favorite for the Big 12 Freshman of the Year award. Not only did the two welcome that challenge, but they both validated the preseason prediction by achieving the honor.

George was named the winner on the men’s side on March 5, while Littlepage-Buggs was the unanimous selection for the women a day later. The Baylor tandem swept the award in a single season for the first time in program history.

“Baylor’s done a great job attracting highly talented players,” men’s head coach Scott Drew said. “We’ve had back-to-back top 10 picks [in the NBA Draft] and Keyonte’s somebody [that], with

his accolades and what he’s accomplished this year, put him on that same type of track.

“Good recruits want to play where other good recruits have done well, so that’s definitely an advantage at Baylor. The women have had some of the best players in basketball history in college. They’ll continue to do that. Nicki [Collen]’s a great coach and a great recruiter.”



### Darianna Littlepage-Buggs

The expectation for Littlepage-Buggs wasn’t to be a day-one starter. Women’s head coach Nicki Collen was forced to give the true freshman a large role due to an injury to senior forward Aijha Blackwell and eligibility issues with redshirt senior forward Dre’Una Edwards.

Littlepage-Buggs was thrust into the starting lineup early and cruised to the Big 12 Freshman of the Year award. On her path, she earned eight of the 17 Big 12 Freshman of the Week honors, etching her name into the conference record book with the second-most distinctions since 2009.

The forward out of Edmond, Okla., became the fourth Baylor Bear to receive the Big 12 Freshman of the Year award and first since Nina Davis in 2014. The other two names on the list are Odyssey Sims and Brittney Griner.

“It means a lot,” Littlepage-Buggs said. “I know when I got picked [to win it in the] preseason it was a big target on my back to keep it up all throughout the season. I just played and I’m looking forward to just learning everything.” Littlepage-Buggs has turned in 14 double-doubles so far, including 10 in league play, and she ranks second among all rookies in Division I in rebounding with 9.5 per game. Additionally, she picked up an all-conference honorable mention and was a unanimous Big 12 All-Freshman Team selection.

After the Bears lost to Iowa State University 74-63 on March 10, Collen told reporters in Kansas City, Mo., just how much she enjoys coaching Littlepage-Buggs.

“She just never quits and she never shows frustration,” Collen said. “She just keeps clipping along. She never misses a shot and doesn’t run back on defense. Those things that you have to coach out of young kids, you don’t have to coach that out of her.

“She’s going to develop her perimeter game even more. Her future is so bright. And probably the least shocking thing was her being unanimous Freshman of the Year.”

Since Blackwell and Edwards were unable to see action on the court, Littlepage-Buggs said she learned a lot from the two senior forwards. She said they coach her from the sidelines and that she didn’t feel much pressure to fill those shoes.

“I think that they helped me now that they weren’t playing, but I was. They gave me a lot of their knowledge all throughout the season and I just thank them so much because it was very helpful.”

Even though the squad still has the NCAA tournament ahead, Collen knows Littlepage-Buggs’ potential is high.

“She has a chance to be really good,” Collen said. “She’s a willing defender, she’s going to rebound, she’s always going to play hard. As she continues to develop her perimeter game, her ball handling and passing skills, she has a chance to be a true, all-around great player here at Baylor.”

### Keyonte George

In addition to being named the Big 12 Conference’s top freshman by the league’s head coaches, George was named to the All-Big 12 Newcomer Team, All-Big 12 Freshman Team and was placed on the All-Big 12 Second Team. The Lewisville native became the second-ever Bear to be Big 12 Freshman of the Year on the men’s side, as Quincy Miller last took the crown in 2012.

George, a former five-star prospect, was the No. 3-ranked player in the entire 2022 class by ESPN, making him the highest-ranked recruit in Baylor men’s basketball history. George was also the fifth McDonald’s All-American in program history and is averaging a team-best 15.8 points per game (ppg) on 39% from the field and 35% from 3-point range. The 15.8 ppg is the seventh-best average among individuals in the Big 12 as of March 12.

Redshirt senior guard Adam Flagler said he knows how good George is on the court, but Flagler made sure to shout out the true freshman for what he brings outside of the hardwood.

“Baylor’s done a great job attracting highly talented players. We’ve had back-to-back top 10 picks [in the NBA Draft.]

**SCOTT DREW | MEN’S HEAD COACH**

“Keyonte is special,” Flagler said. “Everybody knows how his abilities on the court are just undeniable, but the things that he does off the court in the sense of his energy, his presence, his maturity at such a young age, being able to have open ears to anybody and everybody wanting to learn is so big — so I know that the sky’s the limit for him.”

George said his talent comes down to trusting his work. He said his confidence is through the roof since he has full belief in his training. He also mentioned his teammates and coaches around him give him the green light to take over in crunch-time situations.

“In the back of my mind, I know the coaching staff and my teammates, they have a lot of confidence in me,” George said. “I feel like I’ve proven myself to be able to take [clutch] shots in those last couple of minutes.”

Following the Big 12 Tournament, George is now only 19 points away from the freshman record for points in a season (509). He already holds the program record for most 20-point games as a freshman (12).

George had his highest scoring output of his Baylor career on Jan. 11 when he poured in 32 points at West Virginia University in an 83-78 team win. The 32 points were the most by a freshman Bear since LaceDarius Dunn had 38 at Texas Tech University in March 2008.

But George, who’s projected to be a lottery pick in the 2023 NBA Draft, said he doesn’t try to hunt for big numbers or stats when he plays. He said he’s bought into Drew’s “Culture of Joy.”

“We always talk about playing for an audience of one: that’s our Lord and savior and we want to show that each and every night,” George said. “Just playing for one another. Playing with joy.”

## No. 11 Baylor men’s basketball’s Jalen Bridges lives out dream in green and gold

**GIO GENNERO**  
Sports Writer

No. 11 Baylor men’s basketball junior forward Jalen Bridges said he has one goal: to hear his name called in the NBA Draft one day.

“Just to be able to be one of those guys on that stage and live out a dream that every player who has ever picked up a basketball had,” Bridges said. “It’s just kind of surreal.”

The first-year Bear has been rolling lately and is one of the biggest contributors to the third-seeded green and gold. After transferring from West Virginia University, Bridges put up a regular season stat line of 10.3 points per game and 5.8 rebounds per game on nearly 50% shooting from the field as of March 12.

He said playing with the Bears has

given him a newfound purpose.

“This season just allowed me to reset, both mentally and physically. I’m back having fun playing again,” Bridges said. “That’s the most important thing for me. Last year it was tough. [West Virginia] went on a seven-game losing streak. That’s going to suck the fun out of anything. I’ve just become better from the day I stepped on campus, in all ways of life.”

Early in the season, Bridges struggled to get things going offensively, as he went seven-consecutive games without breaking double-digit points. He said this was his favorite stretch of the season because he was able to



Kenneth Prabhakar | Photo Editor

**TOP OF THE KEY** Junior forward Jalen Bridges (11) sizes up his defender and crosses over to his right hand during a conference game against the University of Oklahoma on Feb. 8 in the Ferrell Center.

**BRIDGES >> Page 2**

## Sarah Andrews exemplifies positivity for Baylor women’s basketball

**MICHAEL HAAG**  
Sports Editor

Nearly every time Baylor women’s basketball junior guard Sarah Andrews walks into the media room for a press conference, she greets the media members with a loud, “Hey, y’all, let’s go,” or, “Hey, hey, hey, how are we doing?”

Andrews hasn’t been like this during her entire three years at Baylor, but when the bulk of the Bears’ offensive production from 2021-22 team moved on to the WNBA, head coach Nicki Collen placed more pressure on Andrews to step up the following year.

Part of that responsibility comes in the scoring department, but it also includes energy, attitude and being a role model for a roster that started the year with eight newcomers. It also didn’t help that the two biggest new faces, senior forward Aijha Blackwell and redshirt senior forward Dre’Una

**ANDREWS >> Page 7**

# No. 11 Baylor men’s basketball’s Flagler grows from role player to team leader

**FOSTER NICHOLAS**  
Sports Writer

Selflessness and leadership are two words that can be used to describe No. 11 third-seeded Baylor men's basketball redshirt senior guard Adam Flagler. In what is potentially Flagler's final year as a Bear, he's helped the team in a multitude of ways throughout his four years with the program.

Flagler transferred to Baylor before the 2019-20 season after being named the Big South Freshman of the Year in his true freshman season at Presbyterian College. Flagler sat out his first year with the Bears and retained eligibility via a redshirt, but he was learning behind NBA talent in hopes of becoming a household name.

“Adam’s somebody who has been in the program for a while, he’s played with some great guards, and now it’s his turn to give you experience,” head coach Scott Drew said. “One thing about Adam is he’s really selfless and really cares about the team, and he has a great feel for what we need to get this player a shot, we need to run this play for so-and-so.

“He does a great job moving the ball ... It's easy to follow guys who care more about the team than themselves, and Adam is one of those guys.”

In the guard's first season with playing time, Baylor won the 2021 national championship. Flagler came off the bench in a key role behind the star-studded guard trio of Davion Mitchell, Jared Butler and MaCio Teague. Two years later, Flagler has taken on the role of being the lead point guard and has thrived.

“You have a culture of joy [at Baylor],” Drew said. “When things get tough, Adam, Flo [Thamba] and [Everyday] Jon do a great job making sure everyone stays together, controls what they can control and competes.”

Drew has transformed Baylor into a winning basketball



Kenneth Prabhakar | Photo Editor

**AND-1** Senior guard Adam Flagler soars through contact on the tough layup attempt against West Virginia University on Feb. 13.

program. With a mix of veteran leadership and young stars, the Bears have overcome a three game losing streak in conference play. Flagler led the team in minutes per game (32.4) and also tallied 15.5 points per game, second to only freshman guard Keyonte George (15.8 ppg).

Junior forward Jalen Bridges said he’s loved playing alongside Flagler since transferring from West Virginia University over the off-season.

“It’s a blessing, honestly, having guys that really don’t care about personal stats, personal accolades,” Bridges said. “It’s [a] culture of joy. We don’t care who is scoring. We just want to win at the end of the day.”

Flagler’s strong year landed him with a plethora of awards, including being unanimously selected to the All-Big 12 First Team, the AP All-Big 12 First team and he’s currently a finalist for the Jerry West Award, which recognizes the best shooting guard in the nation.

Along with all the success on the court this year, the Duluth, Ga., native has been instilling knowledge and passing along wisdom to the younger players at his position. Flagler said his goal was to step up as more of a leader from the first practice of the season.

“Being that I’ve been here for some time now, me, Flo, Jon, LJ [Cryer], guys that have been around and have been a part of a championship team as well, I definitely feel like it’s my role to step into that leadership, especially in the guard position where new guys like Keyonte, very skillful guys — Dale [Bonner] coming back, Dantwan [Grimes] coming in — just being able to lead them and kind of show them the ropes a little bit and show what Baylor basketball is,” Flagler said.

Baylor fans may see Flagler on the collegiate court for the Bears for the last time, but he’s expected to try to make a professional career out of the sport.

Flagler received positive feedback from NBA scouts over the previous off-season, and he may attempt to put his name into the 2023 NBA Draft. He does, however, have another year of NCAA eligibility if he wanted to return.

Regardless, Flagler said he will always have love for Baylor and that there’s never a dull moment playing in the green and gold.

“Every time I step on the court, I don’t care how many times I’ve played, I still get goosebumps,” Flagler said.

# Thamba enters final season

## Fifth-year senior forward aims to finish strong

**GIO GENNERO**  
Sports Writer

After five seasons in the green and gold, No. 11 and third-seeded Baylor men's basketball's fifth-year senior forward Flo Thamba is going into the NCAA tournament looking to polish off his already loaded Baylor resume. Thamba has become the all-time winningest player in program history, and in his time helped to capture two Big 12 championships and the 2021 national championship.

“He’s given his everything to the program,” redshirt senior guard Adam Flagler said. “He’s sacrificed so much and just been a leader on and off the court, a true image of what Baylor basketball is.”

In his final season, Thamba has averaged 5.1 points and 4.8 rebounds per game, but his impact goes beyond just the numbers. Flagler said he believes Thamba doesn't get enough credit and said the guards wouldn't have the success they do without him on the court.

“Stats is what’s most eye-opening for the public, but with him, he does everything to allow our stats to pop,” Flagler said. “He’s the one freeing us up on screens, he’s getting those extra rebounds. His understanding of setting us up and being a relentless worker out there really helps us to have more opportunities. Without him we wouldn’t be able to thrive out there.”

Head coach Scott Drew said he hopes Thamba ends his college career on top because he has meant a lot to this team and program. Drew said Thamba’s outlook in the stat sheet doesn’t tell the full story, unless you’re counting wins because that’s what ultimately matters most.

“Flo is somebody who is solid like a rock. He’s got great toughness to him and great stability,” Drew said. “A lot of the things he does doesn’t show up in the stat sheet but [it does in] the win column. That’s why he’s the winningest player. He has a lot of accolades that show stability and winning.”

Drew and the program have given Thamba three special basketballs as a way of honoring three records that were set in 2022-23. Thamba has the most Big 12 wins in program history (55) and is Baylor’s all-time leader in both games played (114) and career wins (123).

“If we give him one more, we won’t have any more to practice with,” Drew quipped.

Entering his final postseason, Thamba and the Bears earned a top-three seed for the third-consecutive NCAA tournament. Thamba is one of two Baylor men's basketball players to ever play in at least 10 NCAA tournament games, and is one of three players in program history to record eight starts.

“We just focus on the next game,” Thamba said. “Most importantly we just go out there, play our game, execute and try to handle business. ... We don’t really focus on that, even though



Kenneth Prabhakar | Photo Editor

**SLAM DUNK** Fifth-year senior forward Flo Thamba (0) finishes this dunk with ferocity against conference opponent University of Oklahoma.

we appreciate being recognized for the talent our team has. We just pride ourselves with going out there and playing to the best of our ability. With this year's group, we have the ability to do that.”

For Thamba, returning for a fifth year was a decision based on something bigger than basketball. For him, it is a chance to give back to his hometown of Kinshasa in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

“After I’m done playing I want to open up a nonprofit that’s going to have a partnership to give clean water to Africa,” Thamba said. “The reason I had that in mind is because growing up in Congo, we had limited access to water in general. Just having that perspective, I want to make a difference in my culture, because I have an opportunity to do something big.”

## BRIDGES from Page 1

respond the way he wanted to, by replying with 10+ points in 11 of the next 13 games.

“Shooting bad was a test of character for me,” the Fairmont, W. Va., native said. “I could have easily gone a different way about it, but I just stuck to what I do, stuck to my work. I trusted in my work, my teammates, my coaches believing in me and it just got better.”

For the 6-foot-7-inch forward, he’s been around the game from a young age. Bridges said he became infatuated with basketball while watching his dad play at a local park around where he grew up.

Despite playing in recreational and school leagues since the age of four, he said he was never very tall, and that up to his freshman year of high school, things hadn’t clicked yet. Bridges hit a crossroads and from then on, it became bigger than a game.

“I fell in love with the game around my freshman year [of high school],” Bridges said. “I really wasn’t getting to play that much and not as much as I thought I should. I had two options: either go to a different high school or get in the gym and get better.

“I went with option two and locked in on my craft. My dad was waking me up before school, [I was] going back to the gym after school and just building good habits from a young age.”

His hard work and discipline paid dividends and have not gone unnoticed by head coach Scott Drew.

“Jalen does a lot of the things that lead to winning plays,” Drew said. “He does a tremendous job on the glass, low turnover guy, makes the right passes, doesn’t force things. He’s getting more and more comfortable putting it down, and the fact that he shoots it so well, [it] stretches the defense, which gives other people opportunities.”

Bridges said the hardest part about transferring was leaving his hometown of Fairmont for the first time in over 20 years.

He grew up in the town and went on to play college ball up the road in Morgantown, W. Va., always staying within a short radius of his family and hometown friends. However, he said Baylor has exceeded expectations.

“Everything kind of lived up to the expectations that I had. This is one of the best places that you can be as a college athlete or just college student,” Bridges said. “It’s a blessing that the coaches took a chance on me and it worked out.”

With the regular season in the rearview mirror, Bridges said the team isn’t done making noise as the squad heads into the NCAA tournament.

“You have to leave the place better than you found it, so we’re trying to go all the way,” Bridges said. “There’s some comparisons between us and the national championship team because of how elite the guards are. Overall, it’s a different roster, but I still feel like we have that talent level. We’ll go as far as we want to.”

Cover photos by Kenneth Prabhakar | Photo Editor

### Meet the Staff

<b>EDITOR-IN-CHIEF</b> Rachel Royster*	<b>OPINION EDITOR</b> Tatum Mitchell*	<b>PHOTOGRAPHERS</b> Olivia Havre Katy Mae Turner Assoah Ndomo Grace Everett	<b>MANAGING EDITOR</b> Nate Smith*
<b>NEWS EDITOR</b> Ana Ruiz Britson*	<b>PHOTO EDITOR</b> Kenneth Prabhakar	<b>ADVERTISING SALES REPRESENTATIVES</b> Brooklyn Bare Lucy Hasty Will Obar	<b>SPORTS DIRECTOR</b> Joe Pratt
<b>COPY EDITORS</b> Sydney Kerbow Caitlyn Meisner	<b>CARTOONIST</b> Gwen Ueding* Gracie Speer	<b>SOCIAL MEDIA EDITOR</b> Alexandra Laurence	<b>BROADCAST REPORTERS</b> Braden Murray Kaity Kempf Danika Young Pierson Luscy Kaitlin Sides Jessica Rajkumar Brady Small Abbey Ferguson
<b>WEB EDITOR</b> Nick Cook	<b>ARTS &amp; LIFE WRITERS</b> Olivia Turner Maximilian Diehl	<b>EVENT MARKETING</b> Meixi Tao	<b>SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING</b> Maggie Alexander
<b>SOCIAL MEDIA EDITOR</b> Lily Nussbaum	<b>NEWS WRITERS</b> Raylee Foster Luke Lattanzi Stephy Mahoney Sydney Matthews Shelby Peck Kassidy Tsikitas Sarah Wang	<b>GRAPHIC DESIGNER</b> Brynley Jones	<b>Lariat TV News</b>
<b>ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR</b> Jenna Fitzgerald			
<b>ARTS &amp; LIFE EDITOR</b> Emma Weidmann*			
<b>SPORTS EDITOR</b> Michael Haag	<b>SPORTS WRITERS</b> Foster Nicholas Gio Gennero*	<b>EXECUTIVE PRODUCER</b> George Schroeder	

\* Asterisks indicate member of The Editorial Board

### Contact Us

**General Questions:**  
Lariat@baylor.edu  
254-710-1712

**Sports:**  
LariatSports@baylor.edu

**Arts:**  
LariatArts@baylor.edu

**Advertising Inquiries:**  
Lariat\_Ads@baylor.edu  
254-710-3407

### Opinion

The Baylor Lariat welcomes reader viewpoints through letters to the editor and guest columns. Opinions expressed in the Lariat are not necessarily those of the Baylor administration, the Baylor Board of Regents, the student body or the Student Publications Board.

### Editorials, Columns & Letters

Editorials express the opinions of the Lariat Editorial Board. Lariat letters and columns are the opinions of an individual and not the Baylor Lariat.

### Lariat Letters

To submit a Lariat Letter, email Lariat-Letters@baylor.edu. Letters should be a maximum of 400 words. The letter is not guaranteed to be published.

# Super-seniors hope to leave lasting mark

## Asberry, Bickle reflect on time with Bears

BY FOSTER NICHOLAS  
Sports Writer

For graduate students forward Caitlin Bickle and guard Ja'Mee Asberry, the Big Dance will be the final ride of their collegiate careers. Despite Asberry only being with the Baylor women's basketball program for two seasons following her three-year tenure at Oklahoma State University, she said she hopes her impact will last on the younger athletes.

"I feel like my name is always going to be remembered, hopefully," Asberry said. "I just hope one day [my teammates] say, 'I hope I can be like Ja'Mee and Cait when we're seniors.'"

In an up-and-down season for the Bears (19-12), one thing has been consistent: the unquestioned leadership and work ethic of the graduate student duo. Both Bickle and Asberry were tasked with leading the team through the year and have been the glue holding the team together.

"Caitlin has just had this evolution of being someone who was all about Baylor and always a great team player, to someone who truly impacts whether we win or lose and that can't be understated," head coach Nicki Collen said.

Bickle entered her fifth year as a Bear, ready to up her production and increase the drive of the women around her. As Collen's "security blanket," Bickle grew in a lot of ways. In her first year as a full-time starter, Bickle had the best season of her career in 2022-23. She averaged 12.2 points per game, 7.1 rebounds per game, and continued to play in the middle of the paint in order to defend opposing post players and take charges.

So far this season, the Baylor forward has career-highs in blocks (14), steals (24), but also fouled out the most times in her time with the Bears (six times). Despite getting into consistent foul trouble, Bickle hasn't fouled out since Feb. 22 in a 67-57 win at Texas Christian University.



Kenneth Prabhakar | Photo Editor

**SHOOT FOR THE STARS** Guard Ja'Mee Asberry leaves both the crowd and teammates on the edge of their seats as she goes for a shot during a game against the University of Texas.

Bickle's 2023 campaign has showcased six double-doubles, 27 starts in 27 appearances and 15 double-digit performances. Her highest scoring output came when she scored 30 points for the first time in her career in a 98-92 overtime loss to then-No. 16 University of Oklahoma on Feb. 7 in the Ferrell Center.

Bickle was emotional ahead of Baylor's 63-52 Senior Night loss to West Virginia University on March 4, and she said the last five years have "felt like a lifetime."

Asberry's five-year journey has looked pretty different from Bickle's. "For me, I've had a way different path than Cait," Asberry said. "I'm



Kenneth Prabhakar | Photo Editor

**REMEMBER THE NAME** Followed closely by an opposing Iowa Cyclone, Baylor Bear forward Caitlin Bickle charges across the court.

just happy I made it this far without giving up."

Asberry came to Baylor as a senior transfer from Oklahoma State. In her last year with the Cowgirls, the Tulsa, Okla., native was awarded All-Big 12 Second Team honors. She felt she had reached a new level and decided to transfer to Baylor in order to further elevate her skill.

"Why Baylor? It looks good on your resume, one, for school," Asberry said. "Two, everyone here loves you. Three, your teammates and your coaching staff love you. Four, for me personally, you get to get away from everyone. It's not as small as Stillwater, of course, but it's still small and quiet."

Even though Asberry may love the quiet in Waco, she showed her loud ability on the court. In what is her final year as a Bear, Asberry has averaged 10.8 points per game and played strong defense on the perimeter.

With a seven-point outing in a 71-61 win over Texas Tech University on Feb. 25, Asberry eclipsed 1,500 career

points. She was already just one of three members on the team with 1,000 or more total career points. Asberry has reached double-figure scoring in 18 games this year and recorded a season-high of 21 points in an 87-68 loss on the road at Kansas State University on Feb. 15.

However, the highlight of her career was a year ago when she helped the Bears win the program's 12th-straight regular season Big 12 championship.

"I think in terms of roles and expectations, personally, when [Ja'Mee] came here last year, at times she was the fifth option on the floor," Collen said. "A really good fifth option. But it was about playing for a championship and being part of a championship program. And for that to happen for her and [Jordan Lewis] last year was really, really special."

The Bears are preparing to duke it out in the NCAA tournament, but no matter how far they go, Bickle and Asberry believe they've left their mark on the Baylor women's basketball program.

# The Words We Use

BEALL POETRY FESTIVAL 2023

MARCH 29-31, 2023

**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 29**

**Student Literary Award Ceremony**  
Treasure Room, Armstrong Browning Library, 3:30 p.m.

**\*Poetry Reading by Shane McCrae**  
Bennett Auditorium, 5:30 p.m.

**THURSDAY, MARCH 30**

**Virginia Beall Ball Lecture in Contemporary Poetry by Sumita Chakraborty**  
Treasure Room, Armstrong Browning Library, 3:30 p.m.

**\*Poetry Reading by A. Van Jordan**  
Bennett Auditorium, 5:30 p.m.

**FRIDAY, MARCH 31**

**Panel Discussion with all participants**  
Treasure Room, Armstrong Browning Library, 3:30 p.m.

The Beall Poetry events are free and open to the public.  
The evening events qualify as Creative Arts Experience credits.

# Five most memorable moments in Ferrell Center history

MICHAEL HAAG  
Sports Editor

With the final full season of the Ferrell Center in the rearview mirror, it

presents an opportunity to look back at the many great moments that took place in the venue over the last 35 years. We've compiled what we

believe are five of the most memorable moments in the history of the Ferrell Center for both the men's and women's basketball programs.



**UPSET** Baylor center Kalani Brown (21) works around Connecticut forward Napheesa Collier during an NCAA college basketball game Jan. 3, 2019.

AP Photo/Ray Carlin



**BEARS ON TOP** The No. 3 Bears celebrated not only their outgoing seniors but also their Big 12 regular season title on March 7, 2021

Lariat file photo



**FEELING THE LOVE** Junior forward Brittney Griner (42) high-fives fans following her dominant 41-point against Iowa State University on March 3, 2012.

Baylor Roundup file photo



Josh McSwain | Baylor Roundup

**DOWNSIZING** The Paul and Alejandra Foster Pavilion will have around 7,000 seats compared to the Ferrell Center's around 10,300 seats in order to sell out more games in seasons to come.

## Lady Bears score monster upset of No. 1 University of Connecticut

It doesn't take much research to find that the University of Connecticut has one of the most successful women's basketball programs of all time. And when the Huskies, who were the No. 1 team in the country at the time, rolled into Waco on Jan. 3, 2019, everyone knew the daunting challenge that head coach Geno Auriemma and UConn brought. But Baylor, which was ranked No. 8, decided to make that day a historic one, as it knocked off the top-ranked Huskies 68-57 for UConn's first regular season loss in over four years. Senior All-American Kelani Brown dominated that game with a 22-point, 17-rebound performance in front of a sold out Ferrell Center crowd of 10,284. The win extended Baylor's own home-court,

non-conference winning streak to 45 straight. UConn hadn't lost a regular-season game since Nov. 17, 2014, and it snapped a string of 126 consecutive wins. The Lady Bears held the Huskies to their lowest scoring output of the season, and it was the first time Baylor has ever beaten a No. 1 team. In the game, UConn shot 29% from the floor, which was the worst percentage it has shot in over 20 years. The Huskies had also not lost a game by double digit points since 2012. Baylor's upset win over UConn will go down as one of the best in program history and among all upsets in the history of the sport.

## Bittersweet icing on the cake: Bears finish undefeated at home with win against Texas Tech

With an 88-73 win over No. 18 Texas Tech University, No. 3 Baylor men's basketball finished the 2020-21 season undefeated at home for the first time since the 1947-48 season. It completed an 11-0 campaign in the Ferrell Center that year, capped off with the Senior Day win over the Red Raiders. MaCio Teague was unconscious from deep in the March 7, 2021 contest, as Teague tied a school

record with 10 made 3-pointers – the second-most in the 25-year history of the Big 12 – and posted a Baylor career-high 35 points. Additionally, fellow senior Mark Vital recorded his first double-double of that season and third of his career, courtesy of 10 points and 15 rebounds. Vital finished with a school-record 45 conference wins that is now held by fifth-year senior forward Flo Thamba (55).

## Griner scores career-high 41, Baylor women's basketball tops Iowa State 77-53

Junior forward Brittney Griner stepped up to the plate with a 41-point performance to lead top-ranked Baylor women's basketball to its first undefeated regular season in program history. Griner's dominance helped the Lady Bears cruise past Iowa State University with a score of 77-53 on March 3, 2012 in the regular season finale in the Ferrell Center.

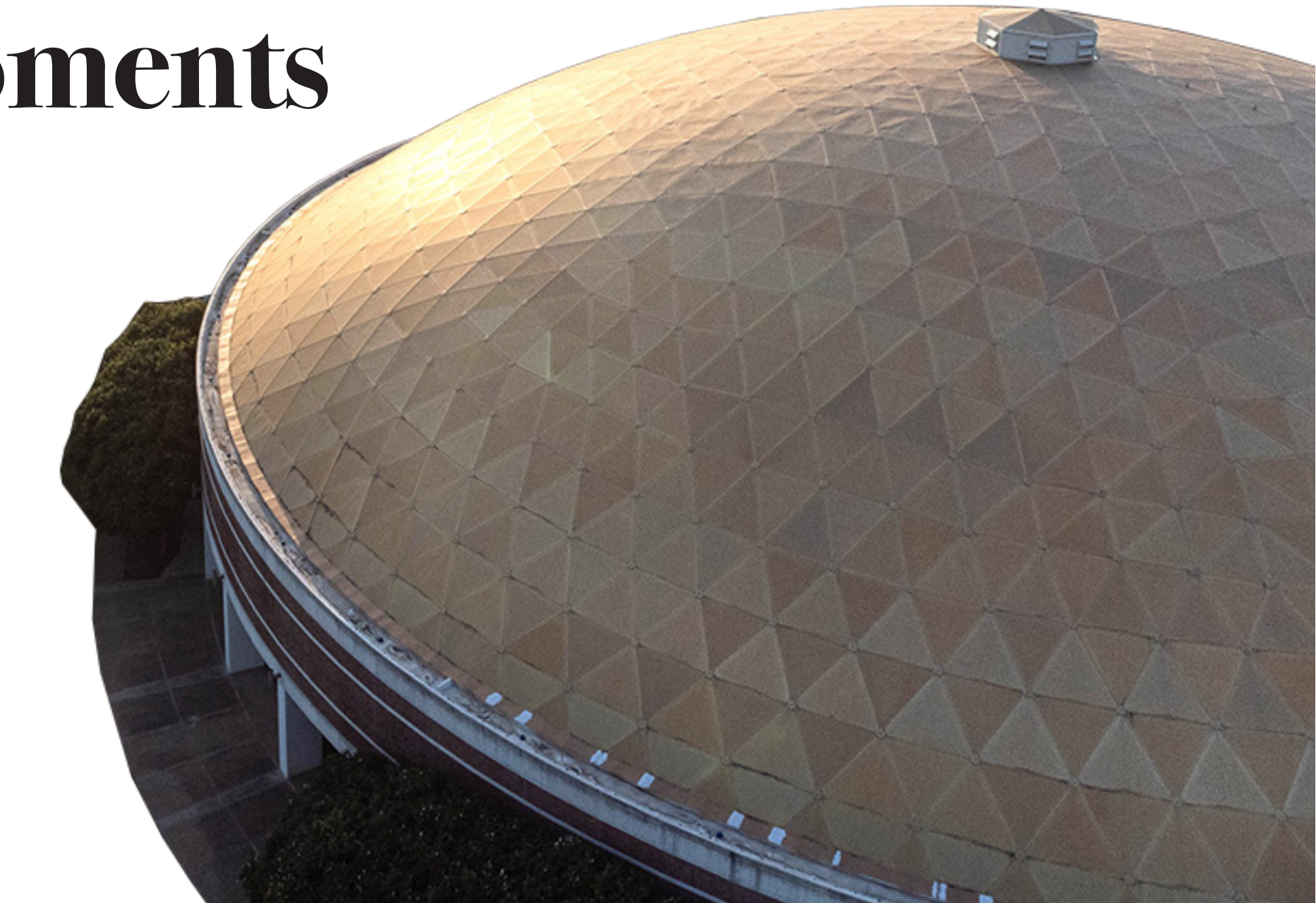
Griner and the team continued to roll, as it wound up as the 2012 NCAA national champions, going 40-0 in the process. At the time of the win over the Cyclones, Baylor had been winning its games by an average margin of nearly 28 points. The Lady Bears also stretched their home-court winning streak to 40 in a row with the success over ISU.

## Home court hype: Foster Pavilion project

FOSTER NICHOLAS  
Sports Writer

With the final full season at the Ferrell Center a thing of the past, all eyes are on the soon-to-be-finished Paul and Alejandra Foster Pavilion. In December 2021, Baylor and the City of Waco announced the plan to construct a brand new arena along the Brazos River on the west side of I-35. With just over a year of construction already underway, the Pavilion is on track to be completed in January 2024. The 245,000-square-foot Foster Pavilion will provide seating for 7,000 fans and additional standing room for 500 fans compared to the about 10,300 seats available at the 150,000-square-foot Ferrell Center. While the new arena will have fewer seats, the smaller number will ensure the pavilion is always packed for games and will allow for a louder environment. Mack Rhoades, Baylor's vice president and director of intercollegiate athletics, was instantly excited to share the plans with fans and rivals alike. The brand new home of Baylor basketball looks to give the two programs one of the best home court advantages in all of college athletics nationwide. "Fans will be right on top of the action," Rhoades said after announcing the project. "We believe it's the perfect size for us and believe it provides us the opportunity to fill it to capacity every game, both men and women. From a capacity standpoint, there's

# Comments



Lariat file photo  
**JUMP** Senior forward Flo Thamba (0) shoots a jump shot during a conference game against No. 5 University of Kansas on Feb. 26, 2022, in the Ferrell Center.

## No. 10 Baylor MBB finds redemption with a victory over No. 5 Kansas

The No. 10 Baylor men’s basketball team knocked off the No. 5 University of Kansas Jayhawks 80-70 in front of a record-breaking crowd of 10,628 on Feb. 26, 2022. The raucous, over-capacity “white-out” crowd helped the Bears secure the top-five win over the 2022 national champions in the Ferrell Center. ESPN’s College GameDay was also in Waco for

the top-10 matchup. Senior forward Flo Thamba poured in a career-high 18 points to go with nine rebounds. Freshman forward Jeremy Sochan, who is now with the San Antonio Spurs in the NBA, followed with 17 points and five boards. The win over the Jayhawks marked the Bears’ third win over a top-10 opponent in 2021-22.



Photo courtesy of Baylor Athletics  
**LET IT RAIN** Senior guard Juicy Landrum (20) celebrates after hitting one of her NCAA record 14 3-pointers in a non-conference game against Arkansas State University on Dec. 18, 2019.

## Landrum sets NCAA 3-point record; No. 7 Baylor women’s basketball crushes Arkansas State

It was raining 3-pointers in the Ferrell Center on Dec. 18, 2019, as No. 7 Baylor women’s basketball’s senior guard Juicy Landrum poured in an NCAA record 14 treys. Landrum set the record in front of a sellout crowd, and the noise level actually reached a jet plane-level of 131.7 decibels when she

hit the final 3-pointer. Hoisting 42 points, Landrum had doubled her previous scoring high (23), and the 42 points were the 10th-most in program history. She also snagged eight rebounds and had seven assists.

## Baylor’s prepares to open

certainly facilities that we can compare it to, but in terms of setting, being able to place [the pavilion] right on the river, that’s something that really can’t be replicated.”

As Baylor and the City of Waco continue to work together to build on the foundations of downtown, they hope the finalized product will become a Central Texas staple.

“In terms of the new development for downtown, think about the basketball games and other events and then what’s currently being constructed: retail, housing, office space, new hotels, parking garages, redevelopment of the Riverfront walkway, farmers market, new restaurants,” Rhoades said after plans were released. “[It] serves as the core to all of that activation and growing downtown Waco and just making it a place of destination for the community of Waco and beyond Waco.”

The new riverfront home of the Bears has continued to gain traction. In the past month, Baylor received a \$3.7 million donation towards the Jay and Jenny Allison Development Center that will be attached to the Pavilion. The center will be the everyday home of the basketball teams, providing training facilities, practice courts, conditioning and treatment facilities and much more.

While the green and gold awaits its new home, it’ll be fighting it out in the Big Dance and looking to hang a fresh banner in the Foster Pavilion’s grand opening. Not to worry, the Ferrell Center will still be the home of Baylor volleyball and the No.1 acrobatics and tumbling.



Josh McSwain | Baylor Roundup  
**IN THE WORKS** Just down the road from McLane Stadium and the Ferrell Center, the Paul and Alejandra Foster Pavilion will be home to the men’s and women’s basketball teams next spring.

# Big 12 basketball coaches finally get break from rigors of league play with NCAA Tournament

me,” Gytenbeek said. “I had heard that everybody can beat everyone in it. And that’s true. And I really didn’t know that, because in the Pac-12 there’s kind of a hierarchy. You have to go in with the right mindset.”

Baylor women’s basketball head coach Nicki Collen said the Big 12 is “a really deep league” and the field should have a majority of the league’s teams. But Collen said she knows the women’s side hasn’t lived up to the men’s side historically.

“They can all beat each other up and still be on the two lines and the three lines,” Collen said. “With us, we’re beating each other up and they’re saying we’re on the six and eight and nine lines.”

Collen said she understands why it’s like that, but she believes the women’s side is on a trajectory to change public opinion and be mentioned as the top Power Five conference like the men.

“We don’t have the respect that the Big 12 men do, but we’re going to get there because I don’t think there’s that much of a difference,” Collen said. “I just think it’s the outside perception.”



March Madness

Women’s basketball faces home court disadvantage



Kenneth Prabhakar | Photo Editor  
**HOOPS** Junior guard Sarah Andrews (24) shoots on University of Oklahoma on Feb. 7 at the Ferrell Center.

MICHAEL HAAG  
Sports Editor

A year ago, Baylor women's basketball hosted the first two rounds of the NCAA Tournament as a two-seed. Despite losing in the second round to the University of South Dakota by a score of 61-47, that squad at least had the chance to play its first two tournament games from the comfort of the Ferrell Center.

And with this year's seventh-seeded group headed to Storrs, Conn., to face off against 10th-seeded University of Alabama, it might actually be more favorable for the Bears (19-12) to be away from Waco.

Baylor went just 3-5 in home conference games this season, compared to a 6-3 mark on the road. Four of those six true road wins came against Associated Press Top 25 foes. However, all but one of those ranked opponents returned the favor by evening the series with wins in the Ferrell Center.

Junior guard Sarah Andrews said she and her teammates just don't lock in as much when playing at home. Andrews said when the team is journeying, it's able to

hone in more on the task at hand.

"I think we feed off of not having that home crowd, and it's less distractions as you say," Andrews said. "We can't look in the stands and see family as much but I think we feed off of not having that home court advantage and knowing that you have to be 15 points better on the road."

Prior to the Big 12 Tournament, the Bears went 2-2 in neutral site games this season, but had a highlight, 75-70, win over then-No. 23 Villanova University in Estero, Fla. Since that loss to Baylor on Nov. 26, the Wildcats only lost four of their next 27 games and rose to No. 10 in the most recent AP Top 25 poll, released on March 6.

The Bears' road and neutral site wins over ranked opponents is a big reason why the selection committee deemed them a No. 7 seed, contrary to projections that had the green and gold as an eight or nine-seed.

Junior guard Jana Van Gytenbeek chalked the success away from Waco up to the group's attention to detail and focus.

"I think we do a really good job of

preparing," Gytenbeek said. "We know how important it is to get road dubs [wins]. Just have to be ready, and thanks to our coaches we are."

In the final stretch of conference play, Baylor knocked off then-No. 12 University of Texas 63-54 in Austin on Feb. 27. At the time, it marked the Bears' third-straight win following a four-game skid and the team looked to be rolling at the right time. But the door on any momentum going into the Big 12 Tournament was shut abruptly after the team came crashing back down to Earth on March 4 in the form of a 63-52 loss to West Virginia University on Senior Night.

And the team followed that final home game by tapping out in the quarterfinals of the Phillips 66 Big 12 Women's Basketball Championship to Iowa State University, 74-63, in Kansas City, Mo.

Even though the team is coming off its third neutral site loss of the season, head coach Nicki Collen said she knows her squad has "played better on the road and on neutral floors than we have at home."

ANDREWS from Page 1

Edwards, missed nearly the entire season due to injuries and eligibility issues.

But Andrews stepped up to the plate and delivered for the second-year head coach.

Back in November, Collen said she expected Andrews to become more of a "Batman." That was a pretty tall task given that last year's Batman, NaLyssa Smith, ended up being the No. 2 overall pick in the 2022 WNBA Draft.

Smith had a Robin, too, in Queen Egbo, who was the 10th player taken off the board to the same team as Smith, the Indiana Fever. Jordan Lewis was also a member on Baylor's Big 12 championship squad a year ago, which meant that three WNBA players were primary options for the Bears in 2021-22.

Yet, Collen still put Andrews to the test moving forward, knowing that it was a large ask for such a massive leap. However, the Irving-raised guard responded with a season where she represented Baylor on the All-Big 12 First Team.

The honor was a result of Andrews' team-leading 15.0 points per game and 4.3 assists per game, which is second-highest among players on the team, as of March 12.

Andrews' strong season came amid a lackluster campaign from the Bears (19-12). The team's trend was to put together a strong road win against a top-25 team, but then follow it up with a home loss to an unranked foe.

In dealing with that, Andrews said she learned how to be a leader when it might not come as naturally.

"I think I've grown in a lot of ways because I always think it's easy to lead when you win," Andrews said. "But how are you going to lead when you're losing? It's time to step up and be like, 'Hey, let's move on to the next game.' It's about being honest, and it's not about the loss, but it's about how do you come back and how do you grow?"

She takes that leadership in the heat of a loss and still shows up to post game interviews with her head held high, ready to answer any and all questions. Andrews joked to reporters that "I just can't be in a bad mood," but that's actually the way she presents herself in the public light for this team.

Andrews has taken the Batman role in stride and doesn't make excuses when she or the team slips up. However, she still gives credit to Smith, Egbo and Lewis for what she learned playing in a starting lineup with those pro-level athletes.

"I think I learned from them, and I'm growing into the role that is meant for me to be and finally living up to it," Andrews said. "It's always been there; it's just about showing it."

Collen said the tough part for Andrews is she has to be that strong leader on a consistent basis.

"That's the difference between good and great," Collen said. "That's the difference between us being a conference champion, a Sweet 16 [team], advancing in the tournament is, are you going to lead? If, at any point, if you watched the video or the TV copy every time Bella [Fontleroy] fouled or made a mistake ... you could literally see Sarah grab [her teammates] and say, 'It's all right, let it go.' But she was so engaged, and they were listening."

With the group currently on a

two-game skid, Collen said Andrews' ability to hold teammates accountable is what could take this team deep in the NCAA tournament.

"That's what she needs to do every day if we're really going to turn the page and be great here again," Collen said. "That's just the standard that I have to hold her accountable to, because I know she can do it. I do think she took a big step forward."

"I just want to see her continue that step and be consistent day in and day out in terms of not just how she prepares when she's here, but is she preparing, getting extra shots up, is she watching our game film afterwards? Is she really taking this workman-like approach to her craft and being great? If she does that, then there really isn't a limit for her based on her talent."

For junior guard Jana Van Gytenbeek, Andrews has been one of the more talented players she's seen in her career. Gytenbeek transferred from Stanford University and was a part of the Cardinal 2021 national championship.



She said she's learned a lot playing as Andrews' backup point guard.

"Sarah is just a bucket," Gytenbeek said. "Sarah is so good. And I tell her this every day, and she's like, 'No, I'm not good,' because she's humble. But she's so tough. And it's like sneak tough. Whether or not she'll get her hands on defense, she'll get her hands in the air. On offense, she's shifty, she hits shots. Her court vision is crazy. She's my idol."


Gytenbeek's idol said she's going to continue to have the same amount of energy, whether it's around the media, the team or the Baylor fanbase. Andrews said she just wants to be a beam of light for her teammates so that they don't get too low when adversity hits.

"We'd be lying if we said we were perfect," Andrews said. "Everybody's not perfect. We know what we do day in and day out. Nobody's sitting there drawing up X's and O's with us, with our coaches, and we know what we do in practice and as long as we believe in each other, we don't really need anybody else to say, 'Hey, they can do this or that.' We have each other and we're willing to fight for each other. That's all that matters."



LOOK AT ALL THE WAYS  
WE CAN HELP




**FREE STUDENT CHECKING**  
Student Checking offers checking services with no monthly fees. A Mastercard® debit card and mobile banking are included.




**ON-CAMPUS ATMS**  
We have 2 fee-free ATMs located on the Baylor campus. Plus members can use over 5600 Co-op ATMs without being charged a fee.



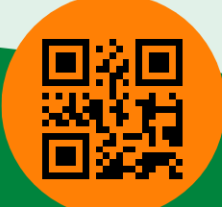
**SAVINGS ACCOUNTS**  
One way to think about saving is to frame it as paying yourself first: your future self, your vacation self, yourself in an emergency — you name it.



**STUDENT & PARENT LOANS**  
1st University Private Education Loans were developed specifically to help pay for college when scholarships, grants and federal aid just aren't enough to cover the full cost of attendance.



**SHARED BRANCHING**  
Through the Co-op Shared Branch network, our members can be served at a vast network of credit union branch locations when they are out of the area.



**1<sup>st</sup> UNIVERSITY CREDIT UNION**  
Federally insured by NCUA  
where bears bank

ALL BILLS PAID - FURNISHED - NO ELECTRICITY CAP



These are the best deals you can find!!!

**1 BEDROOM**  
\$600 - 780

**2 BEDROOM**  
\$900 - 1060

**HOUSES & DUPLEXES AVAILABLE**

University Rentals

Everything for you in a friendly environment!

Bus stops • 24 Hour Maintenance  
Furnished • On-Site Management  
Well Lit & Maintained • Near Campus

**HOUSES ~ 1 & 2 BR DUPLEXES**  
**TREEHOUSE ~ CASA LINDA ~ CASA ROYALE**  
**UNIVERSITY PLAZA ~ UNIVERSITY TERRACE**  
**BAYLOR ARMS ~ THE HOUSE APARTMENTS**

**WWW.UNIVERSITYRENTALSWACOTX.COM**  
**EMAIL: UNIVERSITYRENTALS@GMAIL.COM**

**UNIVERSITY RENTALS**  
**1111 SPEIGHT AVE.**  
**254.754.1436**

**MON-FRI: 9 AM-6 PM SAT: 10 AM-4 PM SUN: 2 PM-4 PM**

# sophomore + junior yearbook pictures

**\*last opportunity  
this week**

**foster atrium**

**9:00 am to 2:00 pm**

**march 15th - 16th**

**walk-ins welcome.**

**say  
cheese!**



**ROUNDUP  
YEARBOOK**  
BAYLOR UNIVERSITY

