



Are procedures in place to keep students safe or is it all just smoke and mirrors?

BY SIERRA DYSON
Editor-in-Chief

Tarleton State University is boasting about reaching record enrollment again this year with over 14,096 students registered for the first week of classes. However, university officials are not telling students what their plans are to keep them safe if they test positive for COVID-19 and cannot properly return home to quarantine.

Tarleton is insistent that the HyFlex learning module, masks and social distancing are enough to keep students safe.

According to Tarleton's fall instruction plan, the HyFlex module, "allows students to move among the three levels of instructional

delivery (F2F, synchronous remote, asynchronous remote) as needed."

That means that some students will continue to meet with instructors face-to-face and therefore are at a greater risk of being exposed to the virus due to cross contamination, especially if they live in the dorms.

Texan News attended a question and answer zoom session with the Tarleton Housing Department as well as Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students Diana Ortega-Feerick to see if they could provide some insight into the university's procedures for keeping students who live on campus safe.

When asked what the university plans to do if a student living in a



Tarleton State University
Photo by Sierra Dyson

dorm tests positive for COVID-19 but cannot go home a Housing Department official said, "We realize that students

are anywhere from four to six hours away from

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My COVID-19 experience

BY KARISSA SMITH
Guest Writer

The Night Out

The night of June 18 I made the decision to travel to Fort Worth with the intention of meeting my friends and having a good night out to celebrate my recent 21st birthday. And I did. We went bar hopping, saw some more friends and ended the night with a small gathering back at the apartment. Seemed harmless enough. Nobody was complaining about feeling sick or expressing worry about going out. I looked good. I felt good. What was the worst thing that could happen?

The First Cough

The morning of June 21, I woke up with a slight sore throat. I im-

mediately checked my temperature, which read 97.3 degrees. Since I did not have a fever, I went to my first job from roughly 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. By 2:30 p.m. I had developed a wet cough, but I still had no fever. I continued on to my second job for the day. A shift that was supposed to be from 8 p.m. to 12 a.m. was cut short because I was experiencing hot-flashes, body pains/aches (especially in my lower back) and my once wet cough had turned dry. Once I returned home, I had a 100.8 degree fever. I made an appointment for the following day where I was tested for the flu, strep throat and corona virus. I then immediately put myself

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Will Tarleton take care of me if I get COVID-19?

BY NICHOLAS RATCLIFF
Multimedia Journalist

Students at Tarleton State University are disappointed with the way Tarleton is handling the students who have tested positive for COVID-19. As cases continue to rise, many students are left wondering what will happen if they contract the virus.

Tarleton told a student to go home and not come back until their quarantine was over when they tested positive for COVID-19.

"In all honesty I was

kind of shocked how they acted considering how bigger schools are reacting," said a student who tested positive but wished to remain anonymous. "They told me to go home and not come back until my quarantine was over. I couldn't do that because I live four hours away and I have a 10-year-old brother at home and a grandpa who just beat COVID-19 and pneumonia that I definitely didn't want to give it to. And I don't have good internet service at home so I would have strug-

gled to keep up with my classes there. So, I was really glad me and my roommate had it because we just decided it was in our best interest and our family's interest to just quarantine in our room here."

Students who test positive and who live on campus at Tarleton are expected to return to their hometowns to eliminate the spread of the diseases within the campus. However, this can be difficult for some due to the wide variety of symptoms that COVID-19 causes.

"They need a better protocol because I am not going to risk my family's health along with mine," said the student, who asked not to be identified. "My friend had it and at her bigger university and if you have COVID they tell you to stay in your room and they send you a care package with food and drinks every week. So, I was completely blown away when they said that because from the way I was feeling I honestly probably could have not drove that four hours without getting

in a wreck because of how bad my body aches were."

Tarleton is trying to offer the students who can't go home another option by introducing quarantine dorm rooms where the student can isolate in safety. They provide a bag of supplies that includes little to no information on what to do if you get the virus and instead contained coloring sheets, boredom busters that appeared to be a workout plan and a balloon.

Junior Biomedical Science major Elizabeth

Brownen received one of these quarantine bags and was confused about what they were for.

"I noticed that there wasn't much helpful information in it," Brownen said. "The thing that confused me the most was the balloon and string which I assumed the balloon must be for some sort of breathing exercise. But as I read through the materials, they were just for trivial games to play if I got bored of quarantine."

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Tarleton students take the stage for first time since shutdown.

BY MADISON REED
Multimedia Journalist

The Clyde H. Wells Fine Arts Center will begin having performances for the first time since the pandemic. "Top Girls," a radio style play and "The Super, Happy, Awesome News" are the three productions scheduled to date.

Due to the pandemic, the theatre department has decided to make the cost of admissions free to students.

Tarleton's Theatre Assistant Department Head Prudence Jones is excited to see how this year will look for the theatre department.

"Our first play that we are doing is 'Top Girls' and...it actually opens next Tuesday [Sept. 22]...It is directed by Carol Stavish; and our second play is currently going to be a radio style play where you can come watch it, but also listen to it on the radio station," Jones said.

"Tope Girls" takes place in the 80s in London, England and discusses the hot topic of women entering the workplace and follows a young woman's journey workings in a male dominated environment. To further stimulate the hardships the women faced to the audience,

the play is an all-female cast which consists of Cheyenne Nash, Cassie Jacobs, Eme Looney, Rylie Fischer, Kimberly Bills, Madelynn Henson and Sarah Adams.

"This particular play is really about—it was written during the early stages of women really pushing into the office workplace and really beginning to change. Our students who are in it—they've been having rehearsals and with Carol and they've been talking about the comparison to what would seem so dramatic then, it is normal today. Of course, they'd have an issue with a woman boss, and

there's a scene about that and how it shouldn't be her it should be a man. But yet now-a-days it's totally normal. When this play was written it would have been much more of an issue," Jones said.

"Top Girls" will open on Tuesday, Sept. 22 and continue showing until Saturday, Sept. 26. Each performance will allow seating for about 30 students every night. Friday, Sept 25, the Tarleton theater department will be broadcasting the show on its Facebook page.

"Every night, Tuesday through Saturday, we are going to have a



Tarleton Theatre Assistant Department Head, Prudence Jones, is excited to announce this semester's line up of plays.
Photo Courtesy of Prudence Jones

live audience outside—I think it's 30 [people can be seated]. There will be

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“ ? OPINION ! ”

Staff and students speak out about the Hy-flex module



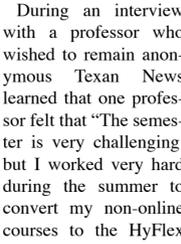
BY NICHOLAS RATCLIFF Multimedia Journalist

better understand how the campus has adjusted. Most professors at Tarleton have adjusted well to the new model of teaching and are happy that Tarleton has found a way to remain open during the pandemic.



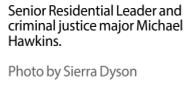
Tarleton State University professor Dr. Marcie Reynolds. Photo courtesy Tarleton.edu

Dr. Marcie Reynolds, a professor at Tarleton during the coronavirus pandemic. During an interview with a professor who wished to remain anonymous Texan News learned that one professor felt that “The semester is very challenging, but I worked very hard during the summer to convert my non-online courses to the HyFlex model. I’ve been teaching at the college-level for nearly thirty years, and I’ve never been more exhausted. I know I’m not alone. This has been tough on my colleagues and my students. I know that. The stress of delivering high-quality content, while doing everything the administration mandates, plus trying to stay healthy while dealing with the stresses of the pandemic and also the political situation is very high. All things considered, it’s good to be alive, have a job, and know that this, too, shall pass.”



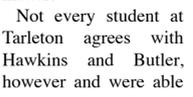
Senior Residential Leader and criminal justice major Michael Hawkins. Photo by Sierra Dyson

to adjust to the transition overnight. Construction science major Rhett Benton said, “It didn’t take me very long to adjust to the Hy-flex other than figuring out which days were online and which days were in person.” Many students have actually found that learning online is easier because they are home and don’t have to worry about their safety, being late on the commute to class, other students distracting them or the professor going too fast because they can always go back and watch the recorded zoom lecture to relearn the material they didn’t understand.



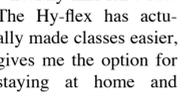
Junior nursing major Conner Blake said, “The Hy-flex model wasn’t hard to adjust to, a healthy mix isn’t bad. The Hy-flex has actually made classes easier, gives me the option for staying at home and feeling safer.”

Not every student at Tarleton agrees with Hawkins and Butler, however and were able to adjust to the transition overnight. Junior nursing major Conner Blake said, “The Hy-flex model wasn’t hard to adjust to, a healthy mix isn’t bad. The Hy-flex has actually made classes easier, gives me the option for staying at home and feeling safer.”



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Tarleton State University has transitioned to a hybrid teaching model this fall semester in an effort to keep its staff and students safe during the coronavirus pandemic.

The Hy-flex model gives Tarleton’s students three different options on how they attend lectures. The first option allows the student to attend in person lectures on their assigned day to limit the number of students allowed in a classroom at one time. The second option is attending the live lecture via zoom during your normal class time and the final option allows students to watch the recorded zoom lecture whenever the student has time.

This transition has been quite the adjustment for the students and staff at Tarleton. Texan News decided to reach out to several professors and students to

State said, “The semester is going surprisingly well. It is nice to see students on campus again and I especially appreciate their willingness to respect Tarleton policies. Even the students attending online or asynchronously are actively engaged and asking questions.”

Reynolds is not the only professor who agrees. Development Director and Instructor Kirk Wise said that “The biggest adjustment for me is not being able to have students in a hands-on learning environment. I teach video and broadcast produc-

tion. Lab time working with the video and audio software is valuable.” Not every professor is having that easy of a time adjusting to the Hy-flex model that is currently in place though but are worried about speaking out against the University for fear of facing repercussions.

Professors aren’t the only ones who have had to adjust to this new method of teaching. Students are also taking some time to adjust to

not been an easy thing. And it should be said that we are all getting used to this new way of learning. This is my fifth year of college, this is a big change from the normal I have known for the last four years. Having my entire course load be online this semester wasn’t my first choice, but it’s what was given to me.”

Adjusting to the new way of learning isn’t the only challenge Hawkins has faced in his day-to-day life since transitioning online.

“The new model of learning has definitely made classes harder for me. Not because the classes themselves are harder, but because I learn better by actually going to class, having

to adjust to the transition overnight. Junior nursing major Conner Blake said, “The Hy-flex model wasn’t hard to adjust to, a healthy mix isn’t bad. The Hy-flex has actually made classes easier, gives me the option for staying at home and feeling safer.”

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SPORTS

Tarleton athletes make the transition to Tarleton coaches

BY CODY DROLET Sports Writer

Tarleton State University hired two former student athletes, Timothy Gowans and Quentin Lasseter, as student assistant coaches for cross country. Both Gowans and Lasseter will be coaching as they attend grad-school and work towards their masters in kinesiology.

Moving into the 2020 Cross Country season and the 2020 indoor track season, Tarleton was looking to add some youth to its coaching staff in order to compete in Division 1 and felt the young men would be valuable additions to the team.

Gowans joins the coaching staff after just finishing a stellar four-year career with the Tarleton track team, competing in 17 meets while finishing with a personal best in the long jump with a 5.92-meter jump, 7.15 in the 60-meter dash, 11.12 in the 100-meter dash and

22.75 in the 200-meter dash.

Gowans believes that he can bring an aspect of experience to the coaching staff since he was once a former athlete and ran for Head Coach Patrick Ponder and Assistant Coach Clay Holland here at Tarleton.

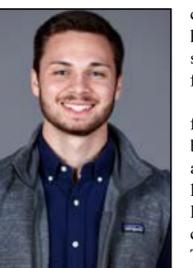
“I think I can bring a good understanding of how Coach Ponder and Coach Holland want their athletes to be coached since I was a former athlete for the two of them,” Gowans said.

He also mentioned what it was like to make the transition from a student athlete to a coach helping other athletes. Gowans said, “It has been kind of a weird transition for me. Coming from being an athlete last year to being called Coach Gowans is a little overwhelming. I’m just taking things a day at a time and trying to keep improving as a coach.”

Overall Gowans is excited to see the athletes he works with get better each day and achieve the

goals set before them.

Quenten, who also ran for Ponder and Holland, is also coming off his very accomplished four-year career with Tarleton Cross Country and Track where he became a three-time All-Lone star conference selection and Cross Country team MVP for the year 2018-19 school year. Recording 30 top-10 finishes he posted career best in the 5,000-meter race with a 15:24, 24:59 in the



Quinton Lasseter Photo courtesy of Tarleton Sports

8,000-meter race and 32:20 in the 10,000-meter race.

Lasseter is looking to bring a level of connec-



Tarleton Track Relay running at the 2020 Texas Tech indoor meet. Photo courtesy of Tarleton Sports

tion to the track between the student athletes and coaching staff because he was once in their shoes and can see things from both sides.

“The most important factor I can think of, is being just removed as a student athlete at Tarleton. The past 4 years I learned so much running cross country and track. The most important thing I can bring to the table is my experience and sharing that experience with the current student athletes because I was once in their shoes. I can connect with them at a certain level whereas someone who hasn’t

had the same experience of running college can’t,” Lasseter said.

With the season being pushed back due to the coronavirus Lasseter thinks that it really gives them the opportunity to develop and really capitalize on their training while making the transition from student athlete to coaching easier.

Lasseter said, “Some aspects of the transition of athlete to coach can always be challenging, but all in all it’s been a great transition. Being a former student athlete really helps because I know what is expected from Coach

Ponder and I can translate that to coaching. He runs a great high-class program and I’m very excited to learn from him even more so I’m a successful and knowledgeable coach when I leave Tarleton.”

Both Ponder and Gowans are excited to gain this experience and learn new things in the coaching aspect as they attend grad-school and work towards their masters in kinesiology. With the training season kicking off it will be exciting to see what the former coaching staff and the student assistant coaches have in store.

Football player’s thoughts on season delay

BY THOMAS WINZELER Managing Editor

One of the casualties of the COVID-19 pandemic was Tarleton State University’s fall football season. In early August the school announced it would delay the 2020 fall football season until spring 2021. While many of the players would have liked to play this season, it was understood that this was to ensure fan and player safety.

The decision was made on Aug. 10, that same day Coach Whitten told the players that the season would be delayed which was met with mixed responses.

Transfer quarterback Steven Duncan said, “I’m okay with anything

that will help us get back on the field and keep everyone safe. Even if it means delaying the season.”

Freshman offensive linemen Myles Ward said his first reaction when he heard that the season was going to be delayed was one of mixed emotions. He was disappointed but got over it quite quick.

Ward said, “I’m here for my education. I was blessed by god and Coach Whitten to get that chance.”

When asked if he’s experienced any major changes from high school to college, he said “The only major has been COVID-19, which pushed back when I was supposed to be here.”

While Ward is just

beginning his football career at Tarleton, another player is finishing it as he enters his senior year. Cornerback Tre Johnson is entering his senior year and is looking to be the leader for the cornerbacks. He is using the extra practice time to get some work in and keep grinding. The extra practice looks to be paying off because he said people have noticed the improvements on the defensive side of the ball compared to last year.

In regard to COVID-19, he mentioned some of the protocols that the football team has in place.

“We get tested weekly,” Johnson said. “If you’re around someone with it, you go into quarantine then get



Tarleton Memorial Stadium Photo by Thomas Winzeler

tested at the end of the two weeks.”

When he heard the news about COVID-19 delaying the season, Johnson said, “It wasn’t really a surprise when Coach Whitten told us, I saw it coming. I’m going to use this time to get better though.”

Tarleton Football has enacted safety protocols during practice to

help prevent the spread of COVID-19. All three players mentioned that they were required to wear mask and stand six feet away from one another.

Duncan said, “Mask are mandatory, we have to follow the rules strictly. Never worn a mask before during a workout but it’s what we gotta do.”

From having to deal with the lockdown, to family members contracting the disease and with the football season delayed these players have pushed through the adversity and have all said their ready to play some ball this spring.

As Duncan said, “When adversity strikes, you gotta deal with it and roll with the punches.”



BY CODY DROLET Sports Writer

Tarleton Recreation Center enacts new mask rule



Starting Aug. 27, the Tarleton State University Recreation Center has mandated that masks be worn the entire time while in the rec instead of the old mandate where you only had to wear a mask while walking around but, was free to take it off while actively running or lifting.

This mandate comes after the rise of reported positive COVID-19 cases on campus went from 163 to 207, which means there were 44 new cases the first full week of classes. This rise in cases has pushed the Rec to make changes to their mandate in order to stay open. This raises the question, is the Rec making the right decision by requiring

students to wear masks?

As someone who enjoys being at the Rec, I think mandating that masks be worn at all times is the move they have to make in order to stay open, but will it stop the rise in COVID-19 cases throughout Tarleton is another question. Based off of the figure above, cotton mask and cloth coverings are rated as second and least effective in stopping the spread of COVID-19. Those are the mask everyone wears and there not super effective at stopping the spread according to the CDC, so the mask mandate in those regards are pointless.

practicing good hygiene and wiping down your equipment after use, in my opinion, is a lot more

effective and allows you to still breath while you’re working out. The Rec has also spaced out

the equipment where you don’t have to be close to someone working out. This should all

low students to remove their mask while lifting and put it back on while not actively lifting and walking around that way students don’t overheat while working out because of restricted breathing due to the masks.

I don’t agree with having to wear a mask while working out, but I understand why Tarleton is enforcing it for legal reasons even though most masks students wear are not considered effective. I’d rather have the Rec and wear a mask than not be able to go at all.



Mask effectiveness from CDC and local health experts Photo courtesy of thehour.com

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Blackjacks opens despite current pandemic

BY KALEY DOWELL
Executive Producer

Blackjacks, a coffee shop and cafe mix, has everything one could want in the same place. If you are looking for a good cup of coffee, Blackjacks is the place to go. If you are in need of a grilled sandwich for lunch, Blackjacks will be there for you. If you are just wanting someone to talk to, Blackjacks has you covered.

Lance Battenfield, owner of Blackjacks and the Lingleville Country Store, took over the store in Lingleville in 2017. It started out as your typical small-town country store, but it soon turned into a place where you can get one of the best cups of coffee in the area.

“Everything that we’ve added here [at the Lingleville Country Store], we’re going to do at Blackjacks, or we’ve already done,” Battenfield said.

Blackjacks is located on Blackjack street in the middle of Dublin, Texas. Blackjacks opened at the beginning of August after Battenfield only got the idea for it in April. Even though the country was in the middle of a pan-

demic that didn’t seem to be going away anytime soon, Battenfield still felt like opening the shop was something he needed to do.

“I was comfortable doing it because God can tell me what the future is... God says ‘Do this thing’ right in the middle of 2020, which is the worst time ever... so I went all in.” Battenfield said.

When asked what makes Blackjacks stand out against other shops in the area, this was Battenfield’s response.

“Number one is quality. You can ask anyone I train how hard I hammer quality into their brain... Look at what you’re doing, use your brain, use your senses... I am training them to be experts, not second tier.”

Battenfield urges his employees to do their very best when making coffee. He does not want anyone to be dissatisfied after they leave either location.

“The second thing that really sets us apart is the people that we have. You

can go to both of our locations here and you can see... I hire next-level people. People who are committed to quality, people I can trust to do the job right, and people that are going to really love and respect the customer.”

Quality of all kinds is key for Battenfield. The quality of how it’s served, how it’s made in their shop, even the quality of the coffee itself. Battenfield said they have tried many different roasting companies but ended up go-



Lance Battenfield, owner of Blackjacks and the Lingleville Country Store making a latte in Lingleville.

Photo by Kaley Dowell

practices on the ground, you are not going to have good coffee. Oak Cliff works directly with a grower. They can tell me about the grower’s family, their community, what’s going on with that person, and how the farm is doing. They know these people. They write short biographies about [the growers] and send them to you so you know a little bit about them.” Battenfield said.

Even with the new shop in Dublin, Battenfield is already thinking about the future and what’s next. He says that they have been brewing beer for a while and are

looking into opening a brewery in the Stephenville area.

“It’s a process that I really enjoy. It’s a whole lot of work... but I



Oak Cliff Coffee, the coffee used by both Blackjacks and the Lingleville Country Store.

Photo courtesy of Blackjack’s Facebook

COVID-19 Procedures

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home and it may not be feasible [for them to go home]...We have spaces available and accommodations for those students, however in some cases, just depending on the number of positive cases, and with time it may not be feasible for us to be able to accommodate everyone. In those instances, students may be required to isolate at home but accommodating everyone is just not feasible.”

Ortega-Feerick declined to comment when asked whether Tarleton had designated isolation rooms, if so where they were located and how many spots there are. They also provided no information about how quarantined students are supposed to get food if they cannot leave their dorms to go to the dining hall despite the interview being a designated zoom session set up by Tarleton Housing to answer student’s questions related to Student Housing Policies and COVID-19.

Other students also asked questions concerning wearing masks outside, housing contracts and what will happen over the breaks but were directed to this website instead <https://www.tarleton.edu/roadmap/case-update/index>.

html which states the number of COVID-19 cases in the area.

Tarleton student Laney Murray also asked Ortega-Feerick if she could break her housing contract and return home for the spring semester if COVID-19 cases continued to rise because she no longer felt safe on campus. They informed Murray that she would still have to pay for her dorm room.

Upon being told she could not break the contract under any circumstances Murray said, “So you’re saying that I am required to put myself in a possible harmful environment to health just because I have one more semester [on campus contract wise]?”

None of the people in the room – including Ortega-Feerick, Health Services Director and Nurse Practitioner Bridgette Bednarz and Tarleton Police Chief Matt Welch – responded to her question.

When asked later in an email what was going through her head when they didn’t respond to her question, Murray spoke only of her concern for her family.

“Most of my family is diabetic.” Murray said, “I want to be able to keep all of them safe by keeping myself safe.

I did four semesters in the dorms, one being a summer semester. The spring would be my last semester in housing, and I’m really wanting to move out because of COVID-19.”

After students were redirected to the website multiple times in response to questions about COVID-19 procedures, Texan News asked Ortega-Feerick, “It sounds like y’all want to appear like y’all are telling us about COVID-19 and Tarleton’s procedures but every time someone has a question you direct us to the website or skirt around our questions and I was wondering if you’d like to give a statement on that?”

No one in the meeting responded until Ortega-Feerick said, “I am not really sure are you specifically asking a question about the process of how to report. Can you be more specific in maybe who you are directing the question to?”

The question was clarified and asked again.

“We are all available to answer those questions that’s why we are having these zoom meetings for different students. We did some with organizations and now we are doing it with housing, Ortega-Feerick said. “You can always contact you know the Dean of Students office and I will be happy to answer some ques-

tions. If they are health related questions then the student health center will be able to answer something specifically regarding to health, if it’s regarding policies we have in place to make sure students are safe and healthy then I can address as the Dean of Students. If you have questions on or concerns if you are going

by the SGA president, NR president and the president of the university throughout the semester. These meetings will be hosted on Zoom and streamed live on YouTube.

“It depends the type of question. We are definitely available,” Ortega-Feerick said, “I think it really depends specifically what your

really like the process. Attention to detail is what beer is all about. If you are going to make a really good beer, you can’t just put the ingredients in there and let it go... So that’s probably on the horizon.”

Battenfield was hesitant to open the shop in Dublin because many stores there have gone under. When asked about why he chose Dublin, Battenfield said he felt like that was the very reason to open the shop in town.

“It just feels like Dublin is discouraged. We want to come in and really bring an encouraging spirit to Dublin... [We want to give] Dublin something that they can be super proud of.”



Oak Cliff Coffee, the coffee used by both Blackjacks and the Lingleville Country Store.

Photo courtesy of Blackjack’s Facebook



Screenshot of the website the officials referred everyone to.

Photo courtesy of Tarleton web page

through the process and you might have a question or concern that can also be handled through the Dean of Students. If you have questions on... concerns if you are going through the process and you might have a question or concern that can also be handled through the Dean of Students.”

Ortega-Feerick went on to recite every organization at Tarleton that has held similar zoom sessions. Other meetings will be set up for students to ask questions about COVID-19

questions is, to answer those questions and in regards to referring to the website, we try and make it more accessible to individuals to they can access anything but there is always someone available to talk to students.”

Still no answer was given by the Housing Department and Ortega-Feerick about why the university doesn’t give straight-forward answers to questions that are being asked in a designated COVID-19 housing question-and-answer meeting.

Texan News contacted Assistant Vice President of Marketing and Communication Ceelia Jacobs about these issues and asked her the same question concerning students constantly getting referred to the website.

“The Roadmap website is designed to keep students, faculty and staff up-to-date on COVID-19 related infor-

COVID-19 Experience

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in quarantine until I got a call with my results. Two days pass, and I receive a call saying my results were negative for all three tests. By this time, my fever had increased to 101.3 but had broken the night before. Since I was initially told that I was not infected, I cautiously went out to run errands and gather household supplies. June 26, the same doctor’s office called again but to tell me that my corona test did test positive. This left me worried, angry and confused. I began my isolation.

Theatre

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chairs out there for them to see the production. Then, on Friday evening, through our Facebook page, we will be doing a live webcast of the show...Friday will be the night we record it so that, since students can’t have their parents come to campus to watch them, this gives them the opportunity to watch it as well.” Jones said.

In efforts to adhere to social distancing guidelines, the theatre department has completely altered the sets and the way the cast will be acting this semester. One alteration made is the cast will be wearing clear face masks, which will allow the audience to still see the actor’s facial expressions during the production while still keeping the cast

safe. The play will also be performed outside on the steps of the Fine Arts center rather than at the traditional theatre. “Top Girls” had originally been intended to be performed last spring, but it had to be pushed to the fall because of classes being moved to online after Spring Break last semester. Cheyenne Nash, who will be portraying the lead character Marlene, also commented on the safety precautions the theatre department has taken.

Nash said, “COVID-19 has affected us tremendously. We are using masks and social distancing as best we can, but the main change to our show is the location. We will be performing outside the fine arts center to enhance our audience’s safety during the performance.”

Another upcoming event for the theatre de-

partment is the casting for the next two plays—the radio style play and the children’s play, “The Super, Happy, Awesome News.” Open auditions will be at the Clyde H. Wells Fine Arts Center on Monday, Sept. 28.

If you are thinking about auditioning for the plays, “You should definitely come out when we have auditions. The theatre students on campus love new friends and experiences the talents of others [bring], so all are welcomed,” Nash said.

Due to the national pandemic and social distancing guidelines, the children from the elementary and middle schools in the area who normally visit the Fine Arts Center every October are no longer able to come this year. However, the theatre department has come up with an idea that will still allow the young students to see a performance.

enrolled in nine credit hours for the summer semester. It was hard keeping a posi-



COVID-19 survivor Karissa Smith
Photo courtesy of Karissa Smith

tive spirit, especially when knowing that hundreds of thousands of people have died

from the corona virus and I constantly beat myself up for not taking that into consideration the night I decided to go out. It was hard trying to keep myself occupied so I would not succumb to boredom. There is only so much I could do in my one-bedroom apartment. But what I am grateful for is the compassion that was shown to me. My neighbor would leave food on my doorstep. My professors were lenient and understanding. The university reached out to offer assistance. Friends and family called to check on me, some even wrote me letters. Knowing that people were thinking of me thought of and cared for was what made my

isolation bearable. **The Aftermath** Corona virus has affected everyone, whether they realize it or not. I am grateful that I was able to overcome my illness because others have not been as lucky. This year is going to be discussed for years to come and it has been an eye-opening experience. Since my recovery, I have been more cautious and mindful of always having a mask with me. It is my opinion that there is no longer a reasonable excuse for not protecting yourself or the others around you. I had to learn that the hard way. Wear a mask. Wash your hands. Protect one another. Stay safe.

information about what will be happening at the Fine Arts Center, be sure to check out its Facebook page, Theatre at Tarleton, or its Instagram page, @theatre-at-tarleton.

theatre department has not slowed down this semester. They have a full line-up of plays that they will showcase this semester.

If you have any questions or would like more



The Clyde H. Fine Arts Center will be hosting “Top Girls” outside the theater near the steps due to social distancing.

Photo by Madison Reed

disinfect and clean regularly while they still attend their classes.

Brownen, like many other students, does not feel like this is enough.

“I am glad to be back here and want to be attending face-to-face as that’s how I learn best. I just wish the school provided us with better in-

formation and services that would keep the rest of the healthy population safe. If I was sick, I highly doubt any of the information in that packet would have been helpful,” Brownen said.

“I definitely agree we need more transparency especially now,” said the other student in this

story who asked not to be identified. “People need to understand that it’s definitely a time of need for us to come together. Because some people are in the dark about it and some are just acting like it’s a burden. And it is but that’s why we need all the help we can get.”

Will Tarleton take care of me?

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According to Tarleton’s website that handles COVID-19 information, if a student who lives on campus at Tarleton test positive for COVID-19, they are assigned to an isolation

dorm room with up to one other person. Once they are there, they receive a packet of information they are given three meals a day at 9:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m. and

4:00 p.m., and are not allowed to leave until 10 days after their symptoms appear and they receive a note from a doctor saying they are safe. While they are in the room, the student is expected to

Cheap meals during a pandemic

BY JEREMIAH DALTON
Arts Director

Since the shutdown in March many college students have had to tighten their spending throughout the COVID-19 pandemic in order to make ends meet. Fresh produce can be expensive but thankfully there are several places around Stephenville, Texas that have cheap meals or discounts for college students and there are multiple apps you can download when eating at places in order to get free food or coupons.

There is an app for almost every restaurant out there and they give out deals like crazy. Tar-

leton Senior Matthew Rieger has several apps for restaurants around town and says they save him hundreds of dollars a year. His favorite app is the Whataburger app. Rieger said,

“I love using the Whataburger app on Thursdays after paradigm because it makes food affordable and I can still go out to eat with my friends.”

Another good tip is to figure out restaurant deal days and specials. Freshman Griffin Berend said, “The McDonalds Dollar Menu has saved me a lot of money and is great.”

Wendy’s also has the 4-for-\$4.00 deal, a burger, fries, nuggets and a drink, Montana’s has half price appetizers from 2-5 Monday through Friday, Jake and Dorothy’s has \$1.00 burg-

ers on Tuesday nights, Sonic has half-price drinks from 2-4 every day, Hobonero’s has a \$6.00 build-your-own rice bowl every Thursday, Fuzzy’s has Taco Tuesday serving \$1.25

tacos, and McDonalds has a dollar menu.

Junior Kiley Shannon said, “As a college student living on a budget, I really like going to Wendy’s and getting the 4 for \$4.00 because it is not restricted to a specific night and it’s a great way to get a good meal with my friends for not a whole lot of money.”

First Baptist Stephenville also serves dinner every Wednesday at 5p.m. Most of the college ministries in Stephenville have free lunches throughout the week as well and Tarleton has the Free Food Pantry if you ever need anything.

There are places all



Freshman Griffin Berend enjoying some McDonalds

Photo by Jeremiah Dalton

over Stephenville that offer deals like the ones above so download restaurant apps, mark the

deals above on your calendar and go save money despite COVID-19.

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