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NORTHEAST NEWS

Open House at Lone Star College East Aldine



East Aldine Campus will hold its OPEN HOUSE on Friday, April 10 from 10am to 1pm.

Serving the Neighborhoods of Aldine, Greenspoint, US59 Eastex, Beltway 8 and North Forest for over 50 Years
VOL. 50, NO. 11 TUESDAY, MARCH 31, 2026 HOUSTON, TEXAS www.nenewsroom.com

Comm. Garcia holds Infrastructure Summit

Summit fostered collaboration among regional infrastructure agencies

The Harris County Precinct 2 Infrastructure Summit, hosted by Commissioner Adrian Garcia, was held on Wednesday, March 18, at the George R. Brown Convention Center. The event brought together regional leaders from both the public and private sectors to discuss how infrastructure investments can keep pace with the region's rapid growth. Regional partners and agencies that participated included METRO, TxDOT, Port Houston, Union Pacific, and the Harris County Flood Control District.



Discussions focused on several key areas including flood resilience, transportation improvements, broadband access, and other critical infrastructure needs facing Harris County and the broader Houston region. The summit also highlighted long-term planning efforts and collaborative solutions aimed at strengthening mobility, improving drainage systems, and increasing community resilience.

The goal of the summit was to foster collaboration among regional leaders to ensure infrastructure planning and investments meet the demands of a growing community.



Aldine Police Department Celebrates 35 Years of Growth, Excellence, and Community Partnership

Laughter filled the room as the smooth sounds of the classic Tony! Toni! Toné! song "Anniversary" played in the background, setting a celebratory tone rooted in reflection, gratitude, and a vision for the future. The Aldine ISD Police Department celebrated its 35th anniversary with officers, both past and present, mentors, district leaders, and community partners gathered to honor the progress the department has made since its founding in 1991.

What began as a modest operation 35 years ago, has evolved into a premier law enforcement agency serv-



ing one of the largest school districts in the region. The event highlighted not only the department's growth, but the partnerships and shared commitment that made that transformation possible.

"This isn't just a celebration of time," Aldine ISD Police Chief Paul Cordova said. "It's a celebration of progress."

"It was good, necessary work — but the scope was limited," Cordova said.

Over time, district leaders and law enforcement officials recognized that the Aldine community deserved more. That realiza-

tion sparked a shift that would redefine the department's mission and capabilities. What followed was a steady transformation into a modern, professional police force tailored to meet the evolving needs of students, staff, and the broader community.

Today, the Aldine ISD Police Department stands equipped with advanced tools and specialized resources, including a robust drone program that provides real-time intelligence to officers in the field. The department's growth has

Continued. See ALDINE PD CELEBRATES, Page 2

Tire Fire damages several Greenspoint businesses



Fire at a Tire Shop on Northborough Drive, visible on Houston Transtar camera

HOUSTON – Houston firefighters say several businesses were damaged after tires outside a tire shop in a Greenspoint area shopping center caught on fire.

The fire happened at a building at 12800 Northborough Drive.

The fire was visible on a Houston Transtar camera located at the North

Freeway and Greens Road. Plumes of black smoke could be seen on the camera.

The Houston Fire Department said they were paged out to a report of the shopping center on fire. They arrived to find tires outside the tire shop burning.

Several businesses in the shopping center re-

ceived damage from the fire.

The fire is now out and crews continue to monitor for any hot spots. They don't anticipate any environmental impact from the fire.

Its unclear whether anyone was inside the tire shop when the fire started, but nobody was hurt.

Lone Star College Campuses hold Open House April 7th

Tour Lone Star College at annual Open House

HOUSTON (March 31, 2025) – The Lone Star College Open House shows how world-class educational programs, facilities, technology and resources can change your life, leading to brighter academic and career opportunities.

The spring 2025 event will take place April 8 from 4-7 p.m. at all eight LSC campuses. "Lone Star College combines affordable tuition, strong transfer pathways, high-quality workforce training and flexible schedules to help students move forward—whether they're starting college, returning or changing direction," said Gerald F.



Lone Star College will host its annual spring Open House April 8 from 4-7 p.m., at all eight campuses.

Napoles, Ph.D., vice chancellor for Student Success. "The Open House is a great way to explore what's possible and take that first step toward your goals."

At Open House, attendees can tour LSC campuses, speak with representatives to dis-

cuss their educational needs, learn about college resources and financial aid options and start the enrollment process. For those interested in LSC-Online, there will be several breakout rooms via Zoom. Learn more

Continued. See LSC OPEN HOUSE, Page 8

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Aldine Police Department celebrates 35 years of growth, excellence, and community partnership,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

not only been measured in size, but also in sophistication, training, and its commitment to community engagement.

Sergeant Jeffery McGowen, who began his law enforcement career in 1992 and joined Aldine ISD in 2021, said the department's future is built on a strong foundation already in place.

"Our Superintendent, Dr. LaTonya Goffney, and the school board set the foundation to where the department is a 21st-century law enforcement agency," McGowen said. "Thanks to them, we have the tools that we need to do our job, and we are not going backwards — we're moving forward. The 35 years of success mean this is a proven product. We're growing, and we're doing the work the community needs to make our community safe."

That growth has also strengthened the department's connection to the community it serves. Through intentional outreach, like the annual APD Trunk or Treat event, and daily interactions, officers have built trust and relationships that extend far beyond campus safety.

For Cordova, the anniversary was personal. Having lived and worked in Aldine for most of his adult life, he has witnessed firsthand the department's impact on the community.

"We aren't just celebrating a 35th anniversary," Cordova said. "We are celebrating a transformation."

He noted that the department's success is the result of collective efforts — from district leadership to ground officers — all striving toward a shared goal.

"This is the return on your investment," Cordova said. "A safer district, a professional force, and an environment where education can truly thrive. To the men and women of the Aldine ISD Police Department: You are the ones who made this progress possible. You did the work. You engaged in the train-



Cordova described the department's early years as a "patrol security model," where officers functioned more as watchmen — checking perimeters, locking gates, and responding to calls as needed.

ing. You built the bridges." As the celebration came to a closing, the message was clear: although the past 35 years have been characterized by growth and change, the future holds even greater promise.

"Here is to the last 35 years of growth," Cordova said, "and to a future where we continue to meet — and help set — the standard for school policing."



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HIGH MEADOWS LIBRARY NEWS

CAREER AND COLLEGE HELP | AYUDA PARA BUSCA DE EMPLEO O CARRERAS
Wednesday, April 01, 12:00pm-6:00pm
Description
Ready to re-enter today's workforce with confidence? Join us for a practical, empowering one-on-one meeting designed to help you take the next step in your career journey!
Connect with a Future U advisor! Discover the college and career resources around you.
What we offer:
* Built professional resumes
* Prepare for all types of interviews by discovering key elements.
* Access free online career resources from our Harris County libraries to continue developing your career skills and confidence.

TOON CAFÉ
Wednesday, April 01, 3:00pm-4:00pm
Description
Lights, laughter, and classic cartoons!
Calling all teens—come hang out at the library for a special cartoon
Bring your own favorite snacks to enjoy while you watch and get ready for a fun-filled break with nonstop cartoon comedy. If you love animation and humor, this is the perfect event for you!

KRAFTY KIDS
Wednesday, April 01, 3:30pm-4:30pm
Description
Krafty Kids offers a fantastic chance for your children to unleash their creativity while having a great time in a safe and inviting space. Whether it's painting, drawing, sculpting, or other activities, there's something for every budding artist to delight in.

BOOK BUDDIES @ HIGH MEADOWS
Wednesday, April 01, 4:15pm-5:00pm
Description

Book Buddies is a FREE literacy program that brings child and teens together to share the joy of reading. It pairs trained teen volunteers (Big Buddies) with children in K-3rd grades (Little Buddies).
Each Wednesday for 10 weeks, Big Buddies and Little Buddies will meet to read together and create positive experiences surrounding literacy. By the end of the session, we aspire that all Little Buddies will learn to love to read and form positive associations with reading.
Applications to be a Little Buddy or Big Buddy are available at the High Meadows Library until capacity is reached!
Teen volunteers (Big Buddies) must attend a Big Buddy training to participate in the program.

CIUDADANÍA
Thursday, April 02, 11:00am-12:30pm
Description
Join us for a free class to help you prepare for your naturalization interview and civics test. An English assessment must be taken for class admittance. Taking this class does not grant citizenship or pay for any application fees. Registration is required as space is limited.
Únase a nosotros en un curso gratuito para ayudarlo a prepararse para su entrevista de naturalización y examen de educación cívica. Es necesario realizar una evaluación de inglés para ser admitido. Este curso no otorga la ciudadanía ni cubre ninguna tarifa de solicitud. Es necesario inscribirse, ya que el cupo es limitado.

TEEN LOUNGE
Thursday, April 02, 3:00pm-5:00pm
Description
Calling all teens and tweens! This is your space to relax and unwind. Draw and color, play some games, do a craft, or hang out with your friends—the possibilities are endless! No registration is required. This event is open to ages 12 to 18.

MICROSOFT WORD BASICS
Thursday, April 02, 4:00pm-5:00pm
Description
This class is for people who already know a little about using a computer and want to learn Microsoft Word. Over 6 weeks, we will practice typing, saving documents, changing text, adding pictures, and using Word tools like spell check and templates. The class meets one hour per week and is hands-on and beginner-friendly.
Registration is not required, but please keep in mind that you should try to attend every class in order to build your skills.

THE MAGIC OF COLOR: WATERCOLOR PAINTING FOR ADULTS
Wednesday, April 01, 6:00pm-7:00pm
Description
De-stress, unwind, and enjoy the almost-magical calm that comes from painting with watercolors. This week's inspirations will honor April Fools' Day — whimsical, humorous, and maybe a little silly.
This is not an art class — it's a chance to be creative and relax while enjoying each other's company in an encouraging environment.
See the colors flow from your imagination to the paper and let your worries drift away for a while.
This program is for adults 18+.

ADVENTURAS EN LECTURAS | ADVENTURES IN READING
Wednesday, April 01, 5:00pm-5:30pm
Description
Experience the magic of two languages at our Bilingual Storytime, specially designed for children ages 5 to 8 years old. Each week features a fresh, exciting theme—from high-tech Robots to mythical Dragons. We go beyond the book with interactive games and hands-on instrument play to keep older kids engaged and moving. It's the perfect blend of literacy, culture, and high-energy fun.

CITIZENSHIP CLASS | CLASE DE

AIRLINE LIBRARY NEWS

BILINGUAL STORY TIME & CRAFT / HORA DE CUENTO Y MANUALIDADES
Tuesday, March 31, 11:00am-12:00pm
Description
You're invited to attend Story Time every Tuesday at 11 am.
Story Time is a great way for children to build early literacy skills with stories, rhymes and songs. Parents are encouraged to participate by sitting with children and singing (and learning!) new songs.
Last half hour is craft time!
Children of all ages are welcome.
—Están invitados a nuestro tiempo de cuentos cada martes a las 11 am.
Tiempo de cuentos es una excelente manera para que los niños desarrollen habilidades de alfabetización temprana con libros, rimas y canciones. Animamos a los padres a sentarse con los niños y canten las canciones con nosotros. ¡La última media hora es tiempo de manualidades!
Los niños de todas las edades son bienvenidos.

BOOK BUDDIES
Tuesday, March 31, 4:30pm-5:15pm
Description
Do you have a child in kindergarten through 3rd grade who loves stories—or one who could use a little extra reading support? Harris County Public Library's Book Buddies is a FREE, fun-filled literacy program that pairs enthusiastic, trained teen volunteers (Big Buddies) with younger readers (Little Buddies) for 10 weeks of reading adventures! Begins: Tuesday, Feb 17th | 4:30 PM – 5:15 PM Feb. 17 - April 28 (Excluding March 17th) At Aldine Branch Library
Each week, your child will build confidence, make a new friend, and discover the joy of reading in a supportive, one-on-one setting.

WIGGLE WEDNESDAY
Wednesday, April 01, 11:00am-12:00pm
Description
Come Move and Groove with Us!
Join us for a fun-filled session of reading, singing, and playful movement! It's the perfect way to introduce toddlers to the joy of books and reading while building important motor skills. Through music, movement, and play, we'll help support your child's growth in a joyful, engaging way—because play is essential to every part of toddler development! ¡Ven a moverte y bailar con nosotros! ¡Están invitados para una divertida sesión de lectura, canto y movimiento lúdico! Es la manera perfecta de introducir a los niños pequeños al placer de los libros y la lectura, a la vez que desarrollan importantes habilidades motoras. A través de la música, el movimiento y el juego, apoyaremos el crecimiento de tu hijo de una manera divertida y atractiva, ¡porque el juego es esencial para cada etapa del desarrollo infantil!

TWEEN SPARK WOOD CHARM PAINTING
Wednesday, April 01, 4:30pm-5:30pm
Description
Do you have a child in kindergarten through 3rd grade who loves stories—or one who could use a little extra reading support? Harris County Public Library's Book Buddies is a FREE, fun-filled literacy program that pairs enthusiastic, trained teen volunteers (Big Buddies) with younger readers (Little Buddies) for 10 weeks of reading adventures! Begins: Tuesday, Feb 17th | 4:30 PM – 5:15 PM Feb. 17 - April 28 (Excluding March 17th) At Aldine Branch Library
Each week, your child will build confidence, make a new friend, and discover the joy of reading in a supportive, one-on-one setting.

TEEN CLUB
Thursday, April 02, 3:30pm-4:30pm
Description
Join us for a for a fun Pixel Art Workshop! The library will close early on Thursday April 2nd, so we will meet from 3:30pm to 4:30pm instead of our regular time. See you there!

PATHWAY TO CITIZENSHIP
Saturday, April 04, 10:00am-12:00pm
Description
Join us for a free class to help you prepare for your naturalization interview and civics test. You must complete an English placement assessment to join the class. Taking this class will not grant citizenship or pay for any application fees. Registration is required as space is limited.
This event is also offered on:
Pathway To Citizenship
Saturday, April 11, 2026 (10:00 AM – 12:00 PM)

Bert Barron Adult Program Specialist
Aldine Branch Library
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SCHOOL NEWS PAGE

Aldine Educators Honored for Excellence in Bilingual Education at SHABE Banquet

One of the five educators will advance to the TABE Teachers of the Year program; SHABE bestowed scholarships to four students from La Promesa.

Several Aldine ISD educators were recognized for excellence in bilingual and multilingual education during the recent banquet hosted by the Suburban Houston Association of Bilingual Educators (SHABE).

The annual event celebrates teachers who demonstrate exceptional commitment toward supporting multilingual learners and advancing bilingual education across the Houston region.

"In Aldine ISD, we believe all means all," Superintendent Dr. LaTonya M. Goffney said. "Our multilingual learners bring incredible strengths, perspectives, and potential to our classrooms. These educators are helping ensure every student feels seen, valued, and empowered to succeed — and that is the heart of the #AldineStory."

Gold Distinction Honoree



Fama Sarr
Plummer Middle School

When Fama Sarr arrived in the United States at 18, she was learning a new language and finding her voice. Today, she is helping Aldine ISD students do the same. Sarr, an ESL teacher at Plummer Middle School, earned Gold Distinction as SHABE's Secondary ESL Teacher of the Year. With the recognition, she will represent Aldine ISD at the state level through the Texas Association for Bilingual Education (TABE) Teacher of the Year competition.

Originally from Senegal, Sarr arrived at 18 and quickly learned that language offers access to opportunity and a sense of belonging.

"My path into education was driven by a desire to be the teacher I once needed," Sarr said. "I wanted to create classrooms where students would never feel ashamed of their language, culture, or background."

Now fluent in English, French, and Spanish, Sarr emphasizes supporting multilingual learners as they develop academic language. Watching students gain confidence reinforces her commitment to teaching.

"Students who speak multiple languages are not behind — they are building something complex and valuable," Sarr said.

Silver Distinction Honorees



Mirna Orellana
Thompson Elementary School

Other Aldine educators also received recognition for their dedication to emergent bilingual students.

Mirna Orellana, a second-grade dual language teacher at Thompson Elementary School, received Silver Distinction as SHABE's Bilingual Teacher of the Year.

"This recognition is a meaningful honor that reflects the dedication, perseverance, and strengths of my students," Orellana said. "It represents the work happening in our classroom where bilingualism is celebrated, and students are encouraged to grow academically in two languages."

Orellana highlighted how rewarding it is to see students realize bilingualism as a strength.

"Multilingual learners bring rich cultural experiences, determination, and unique perspectives to the classroom,"

Orellana said. "Watching them grow in confidence as they develop language and academic skills in two languages is incredibly rewarding."

Paisley Jack, an ESL kindergarten teacher at García-Leza EC/PreK/K School, also earned Silver Distinction as SHABE's Elementary ESL Teacher of the Year.

"The SHABE recognition means a great deal to me because it reflects the heart, dedication, and intentional work I put into my classroom each day," Jack said. "I strive to create a supportive environment where my students feel safe, valued, and motivated to learn."

Jack said she enjoys watching students become more confident in their English skills.

"It is incredibly rewarding to support them as they learn to communicate, participate, and succeed in the classroom," Jack said.

Also receiving Silver Distinction was Maria Shelton, a Spanish teacher at Aldine Middle School, who was recognized as SHABE's Language Other Than English (LOTE) Teacher of the Year.

Shelton noted the recognition reflects both her students' growth and her journey as an educator.

"This recognition is very meaningful to me because it reflects the work and growth happening in my classroom every day," Shelton said. "Many of my students come from multilingual backgrounds, and I strive to honor their identities while holding them to high expectations."

After years of teaching history, Shelton's first year as a Spanish teacher deepened her commitment to learning.

"What I love most is the cultural richness and resilience our students bring to the classroom," Shelton said. "In Aldine ISD, multilingual learners are not defined by challenges but by strengths, and it is a privilege to help them recognize the power and value of the languages they carry."

She incorporates culturally relevant lessons and structured support to help students build confidence and academic skills.

"By combining high expectations with meaningful cultural connections, students develop pride in their identity while strengthening their communication and critical thinking skills," Shelton said.

Bronze Distinction

Breanna Jagodzinski, an ESL teacher at Victory Early College High School, received Bronze Distinction as SHABE's Secondary ESL Teacher of the Year.

Jagodzinski said the award reflects her passion for literacy and empowering students.

"I am honored to receive this recognition from SHABE for doing what I love each day," Jagodzinski said. "As a high school literacy educator, I look forward to watching the next generation of empowered readers, writers, and thinkers change the world."

At Victory Early College High School, Jagodzinski works with many first-generation college-bound students and said literacy plays a critical role in opening doors for multilingual learners.

"Once students gain confidence, literacy becomes a tool for self-advocacy, opportunity, and empowerment beyond the classroom," she said. "Literacy gives our multi-

lingual students a voice in spaces that may have once been inaccessible to them."

Jagodzinski previously earned district recognition as Aldine ISD's 2021 Elementary Teacher of the Year while teaching at Houston Academy and was also named a Region 4 Elementary Teacher of the Year finalist that year.

La Promesa Students Earn Scholarships
The SHABE banquet also celebrated Aldine students. Four students from La Promesa High School received \$500 scholarships for their academic achievement and commitment to bilingualism:

- Ariadna Padrón Báez
- Mai Hong Giang Hoang
- Norma Erazo León
- Amairany Sánchez Silva

SHABE works to promote bilingual education and support educators serving multilingual learners across the Houston region.

Sarr will now advance to represent Aldine ISD in the TABE Teacher of the Year program, where educators from across Texas are recognized for their leadership and advocacy in bilingual and ESL education.

The recognition highlights the impact Aldine educators are making to ensure multilingual students succeed academically while embracing their language and culture — a commitment aligned with the district's Accelerate strategic plan and the district's ongoing #AldineStory of preparing globally connected learners.



Breanna Jagodzinski
Victory Early College High School

Davis Senior Nehemiah Jenkins to Compete at THSPA State Powerlifting Championships



Davis High School senior Nehemiah Jenkins has dedicated years of hard work, perseverance, and effort to reach a significant milestone. Now, this dual-sport student-athlete will represent Aldine Independent School District (ISD) at the Texas High School Powerlifting Association State Championships, which are set to take place from March 26 to 28 at the Taylor County Expo Center.

Jenkins, who letters in both football and powerlifting, has made his mark on the field and in the weight room. He plays on both the offensive and defensive line for the Falcons and recently earned second-team all-district honors in his first year playing on the offensive line.

His development has been closely guided by Coach Ray Metoyer, who has spent three years at Davis High School and eight years in the district. Metoyer recognized Jenkins' potential early on, but he knew it would take dedication to turn that potential into results.

At the beginning of the season, Metoyer challenged Jenkins by outlining a plan that included qualifying for regionals and potentially advancing to state. Jenkins fully embraced that vision.

"I told him at the start of the season that he had a great chance to represent Aldine at the regional powerlifting meet in Dickerson, Texas, and possibly at the state meet in Abilene," Metoyer said. "He was fully committed, and he accomplished both. Nehemiah believed in the coaching and, most importantly, in himself."

Metoyer described Jenkins as a mature student-athlete and a team-first competitor who committed fully to his final season, both mentally and physically.

Jenkins' journey into powerlifting began in middle school, but it wasn't until high school that he began to take the sport seriously. Initially focused on getting stronger for football, he soon realized his potential in the weight room.

"I've been lifting since my freshman year to get stronger for football," Jenkins



said. "That's when Coach Metoyer told me that I could go to regionals in powerlifting and possibly state if I started working hard and took it seriously."

Four years of consistent work have led to his qualification for the state meet — a goal that once seemed distant but is now within reach.

"I plan to win state Saturday," Jenkins said.

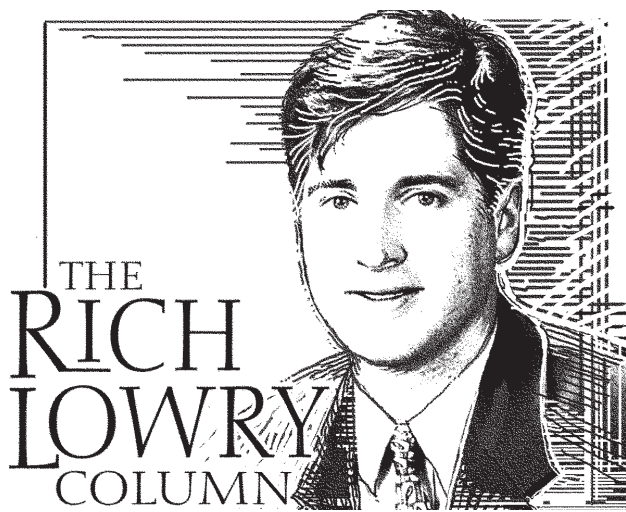
In addition to his success in powerlifting, Jenkins is pursuing opportunities to continue his football career at the next level. He is currently set to visit Howard Payne University and Blinn College before Saturday's competition.

His path to state has not come without challenges, but Jenkins said the adversity only strengthened his resolve and pride in representing his school and district.

"I have been attending Davis High School for the last four years, so I am a Falcon to the bone," Jenkins said. "I am grateful I have the opportunity not only to represent Davis High School, but Aldine ISD as a whole."

As he prepares to compete against the state's top lifters, Jenkins carries with him the support of his coaches, teammates and community — and the confidence built through years of hard work.

OPINION PAGE



The Israel Hoax

The Israel Hoax
We've long known that Donald Trump drives his critics crazy, and he's now doing it to some critics who used to be friends.

That should be a familiar-sounding charge since Democrats and the media spent most of Trump's first term making the same accusation, except the foreign puppeteer was Russia rather than Israel.

All of this is misbegotten, first, because we have never had a president who is so thoroughly his own man as Donald Trump. Good luck trying to control him, as so many advisors have learned over the years.

That includes firing FBI director James Comey in his first term, one of the counts against him during the Russia frenzy, and launching the war against Iran today.

Going back 50 years, no one would have been shocked to learn that a nationalistic American president had bombed Iran. Trump is just such a figure, and sure enough, has bombed Iran twice now.

Trump has made bellicose statements about Iran since 1980, and nothing we've heard now suggests anything other than that he genuinely relishes killing Iran's leaders and destroying its weapons.

Temperamentally, Trump loves exercising power, always wants to do it on his own authority and seeks to preserve his options. It shouldn't be surprising, then, that as commander in chief of the world's most proficient military, he's been drawn to using and threatening force.

Israel didn't talk Trump into conducting his Venezuela raid, or menacing Denmark over Greenland, or looking to Cuba as his next potential target.

One argument, based on a distortion of remarks made by Secretary of State Marco Rubio, is that Israel forced Trump's hand; it was going to attack Iran no matter what, and we knew U.S. personnel would be hit by Iran in response and would be particularly vulnerable if we didn't hit Iran as well.

The idea, though, that Trump was too sheepish to stay Netanyahu's hand if the Israeli prime minister was about to launch a military operation that Trump opposed and was going to jeopardize American lives is preposterous.

Trump has been happy to say "no" to Netanyahu before. He pressured the Israeli leader into turning back planes at the end of the 12 Day War last June.

By alleging that Israel forced the U.S. into war, the isolationists think they are making a harsh criticism of the Jewish state, but they are really damning Trump. What worse offense can a president of the United States commit than subjugating his own nation to a foreign power?

This is exactly why the Russian obsessives so delighted in believing that Trump was a tool of the Kremlin.

Most of the right-wing dissenters blanch at following their own logic. An alternative tack — seen in intelligence official Joe Kent's resignation letter — is to argue that Trump was fooled. Kent said there was "a misinformation campaign" that created an echo chamber "to deceive" the president.

This argument is still a stinging condemnation. It paints Trump as an easily manipulated naif, and on a consequential matter of war and peace. In reality, there was no broad-ranging media drumbeat for war and no wave of popular support. This, again, emphasizes how the decision was Trump's, and his alone.

The Russian hoax was, in part, driven by the left's shock at Trump's victory in 2016. Likewise, the isolationists are having trouble processing the fact that the president whom they invested so much in launched a major Middle Eastern war. But Trump was not owned by this faction of the right, any more than he is owned by Israel.

Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review.
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STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS
By Gary Borders

Islamic Schools Admitted to Voucher Program After Law Suit

Four Islamic schools have been admitted to the Texas voucher program after a federal judge ordered the state to invite the schools to apply, the Houston Chronicle reported.

The judge also ordered the application deadline for families be extended to March 31, citing concerns that no Islamic schools had been approved for the program.

"We received an invitation to register yesterday from Odyssey. We were able to register, and we got approval immediately upon finishing the registration form," Hamed Ghazali, principal of the Houston Quran Academy, said. "In addition, our school appeared on the parents' portal and some of our parents were able to register, choosing our school."

The voucher program gives as much as \$10,400 for tuition reimbursement and other fees to parents who send their children to private school next year, up to \$30,000 for parents of children with disabilities, and up to \$2,000 for homeschooled children.

TEXAS SENATE RUNOFF BALLOT DEADLINE PASSES

The deadline for Republican candidates to withdraw from the May runoff ballot has passed, and both U.S. Sen. John Cornyn and Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton remain in the race, The Texas Tribune reported. Soon after the primary President Donald Trump promised to endorse one of the candidates "soon," but has yet to do so.

Cornyn, who held a narrow lead in the primary but not a majority, recently wrote an op-ed piece reversing course on his opposition to ending the filibuster, which requires 60 votes for Senate approval of legislation. The Senate last week started floor discussion of the SAVE America Act, a bill Trump claims would "guarantee the midterms" for Republicans. Both Cornyn and Paxton now back the bill, which restricts voting access.

There is little chance of the bill passing the Senate because of the filibuster, since all 47 Senate Democrats oppose it, calling it a modern-day poll tax. There also does not appear to be enough support for ending the filibuster, which would allow the bill to pass with a simple majority.

Whoever wins the GOP Senate runoff will face state Rep. James Talarico, the Democratic nominee, in November.

CHÁVEZ OBSERVANCE SCRAPPED AFTER ABUSE ACCUSATIONS

Gov. Greg Abbott ordered state agencies to no longer observe César Chávez Day and said he plans to ask lawmakers



ers to remove the holiday from state law, The Dallas Morning News reported. The move came after The New York Times reported Chavez, the co-founder of the United Farm Workers union, groomed and sexually abused girls and women who worked in the movement.

In addition, many Texas cities and school districts are considering renaming streets and schools and removing monuments to the famed labor leader.

"Let me be clear — no political affiliation, legacy or historic contribution should ever shield sexual predators from scrutiny or excuse the harm inflicted on survivors," Dallas City Council member Bazaldua said in a Facebook post.

The co-founder of the UFW, Dolores Huerta, now 96, said Chavez forced her to have sex and raped her at one point. Huerta said that she kept silent to protect the farmworker movement.

DRAG SHOW BAN FINALLY TAKES EFFECT

A ban on certain public drag shows passed in 2023 finally took effect last week after a federal appeals court reaffirmed its constitutionality, The Tribune reported. The law prohibits performers from performing on public property or where children are present.

Paxton cheered the ruling in a news release, writing "I will always work to shield our children from exposure to erotic and inappropriate sexually oriented performances."

The plaintiffs and the ACLU of Texas, which represents them, said they plan to continue fighting the ban. "The law's vague and sweeping provisions still create a harmful chilling effect for drag artists and those who support them, while also threatening many types of performing arts cherished here in Texas, from theater to ballet to professional wrestling," ACLU Texas attorney Brian Klosterboer said in a statement.

\$16 BILLION GAS POWER PLANT PLANNED IN EAST TEXAS

One of the nation's largest energy projects is coming to East Texas, according to The News. It is part of a \$550 billion investment package that Japan pledged last October and will be built in Anderson County in East Texas.

The \$16 billion natural gas-fired power generation hub will be able to serve up to five gigawatts of energy demand and will be operated by NextEra Energy Resources, a wholesale electricity provider based in Juno Beach, Florida.

Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi visited Trump at the White House last week. The administration has previously said the East Texas project will provide power to meet booming electricity demand, particularly as new data centers come online across the state.

147 MEASLES CASES IN TEXAS THIS YEAR

The Texas Department of State Health Services has reported at least 147 cases of measles in the state this year, with most occurring in federal detention facilities, The Tribune reported. The largest outbreak, with 99 cases, is at the West Texas Detention Facility, which is privately operated in Hudspeth County.

A DSHS spokesperson said the "state's role inside federal facilities is very limited," so detailed information on contact tracing, vaccine response, or any demographic information on infected individuals is not available.

Another 20 cases have been reported in El Paso, Bexar, Bandera, Kendall, Lubbock, and Rockwall counties, according to DSHS, and were contracted from a variety of sources, such as international travel.

Measles is highly contagious and is especially dangerous to unvaccinated children, pregnant women and adults with compromised immune systems. It also has a long incubation period.

AGENCY LAUNCHES LOW-COST SPAY AND NEUTER PROGRAM ACROSS STATE

DSHS has launched a new sterilization program for dogs and cats after receiving \$13 million in state funding to support the initiative for two years. The funds are allocated to 38 applicants to perform these procedures across the state. Grant recipients had to demonstrate the ability to provide high-volume, high-quality, and low-cost spay and neuter services.

"The program is designed to maximize sterilization impacts across both urban and rural communities in Texas. Receiving funding were animal shelters and rescue entities, veterinary clinics, governmental agencies, and non-profit organizations that perform sterilization procedures," the news release said.

To discover which entity is serving your area, visit this link: https://tinyurl.com/5zkzu5bm.

Gary Borders is a veteran award-winning Texas journalist. He published a number of community newspapers in Texas during a 30-year span, including in Longview, Fort Stockton, Nacogdoches, Lufkin and Cedar Park. Email: g.borders@texaspress.com.

THE POSTSCRIPT
By Carrie Classon

Ice Cream Tonight



I had a really good ice-cream cone this week.

I suppose this does not qualify as news, but I try not to eat too much ice cream, and I don't usually keep ice cream in my freezer because I have a tendency to eat it all right away.

I love ice cream. I have always loved ice cream. But I have noticed my tendency to eat it until my face goes numb and have avoided it. When I'm in Mexico, I walk by an ice-cream shop every night, where I have bought ice cream before. It is good. So almost every night, when I get to the ice-cream shop, I pause, and I ask myself, "Should I get ice cream tonight?"

Almost always, my wiser self says, "You don't really need ice cream tonight. Maybe tomorrow." And I don't buy ice cream.

But last night, after I had passed my usual ice-cream shop, I came to a gelato shop that I had ignored until now. I thought it looked a little fancy. I couldn't imagine gelato could be as good as the ice cream at the shop I had just passed. But this place was always busy, and tonight, for a change, there was no one in there but two employees standing behind the counter. I wandered in.

I looked for the smallest cone they had, and I said I would like one.

"What flavors?"

"What do you recommend?" She suggested several and told me I could have up to four. "On one little cone?"

"Yes!" This seemed unusual. It was not a large cone. But I went ahead and ordered two kinds of chocolate, one with nuts and one without, and strawberry and mint. While one of the women took my money, the other one started scooping ice cream.

I had no idea it would be such a process.

Tiny slivers of gelato were scooped out in petal shapes and put in that cone, one by one, going around in a circle until the whole thing looked like a rose. It was too beautiful to eat. I had them take a picture of me with the cone first. But I had to eat it eventually because the petals were hanging over the edges of the cone like the fully opened rose it resembled, and it would not be an exaggeration to say it was the best ice-cream cone I have ever had.

And now I wonder why I waited so long. I try to eat good things. My reasoning is that nothing I possess is more important than my body, and I want to keep it in working order. So I generally eat well and that is usually pretty easy because I love vegetables more than anything.

But life requires more than vegetables. That's what I was thinking while eating my exquisite little ice-cream cone. I vowed that from now on, I will eat ice cream that is worth eating. And I realized that this was no different from reading books that were worth reading, wearing clothes I loved to wear, and spending time with people who lit me up instead of pulling me down.

All of it was a choice about how to spend my time and attention, and all of it started with believing that life was too short to eat bad ice cream, and certainly too short not to eat ice cream at all. I'm having vegetables again today, and I'll have vegetables tomorrow. But there is also a chance that I will have ice cream tonight.

Till next time, Carrie

EDITOR'S NOTE: Opinions expressed here are not necessarily that of this newspaper or its staff. YOUR OPINION is welcome. Send a letter for possible publication to Grafikpress Newspapers, 5906 Star Lane, Houston TX 77057 or an email to GRAFIKSTAR@aol.com. Please limit your words to about 200. Letters will be subject to editing. Thank you.

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Founded in 1977 by Vic & Donna Mauldin
Gilbert Hoffman.....Editor & Publisher
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Published each Tuesday by GrafikPress Corp. Any erroneous statement which may appear will be corrected when brought to the attention of the publisher. Liability for errors is limited to the reprinting of the corrected version. Submissions are encouraged, in person, by mail, by Fax, or by email, to nenewsroom@aol.com
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PET MATTERS
In Memory of Susan Hoffman



HCPH Expands Pet Reunification Efforts by Donating Microchip Scanners to Local Fire Departments

HCPH Expands Pet Reunification Efforts by Donating Microchip Scanners to Local Fire Departments

Community members in select areas can help reunite lost pets with their families—no shelter visit needed

HOUSTON – Harris County Public Health (HCPH), through its Veterinary Public Health (VPH) division, is expanding efforts to reunite lost pets with their families by donating microchip scanners to select fire departments in unincorporated Harris County.

This initiative increases access points across the community where a found pet can be scanned for a microchip, helping animals return home more quickly and reducing the number that are entering shelters.

If a community member finds a stray pet, the first step is to contact Harris County Pets at (281) 999-3191 for guidance. If appropriate, VPH staff may direct individuals to a participating fire department location for a quick microchip scan.



A map of participating departments will be available soon on the Harris County Pets website; an official launch date will be announced once finalized. Be aware, fire departments are not animal shelters and are not equipped to house pets. Community members should not leave animals at fire stations.

“This ongoing effort is an important way to keep pets with their families and reduce the number of animals entering shelters,” said Lauren Davis, Associate Director for Harris County Veterinary Public Health. “A simple microchip scan

can make the difference between a pet returning home the same day or being separated for weeks.”

Microchipping significantly improves the likelihood that a lost pet will be reunited with its family and helps prevent unnecessary shelter intake. HCPH encourages all pet owners to ensure their animals are microchipped and that contact information is current.

For more information about lost or found pets, microchipping, or animal services in Harris County, visit countypets.com or call (281) 999-3191.

Judge Lina Hidalgo and Congresswoman Sylvia Garcia Deliver Meals on Wheels to Homebound Seniors



Harris County, TX, February 14, 2026, Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo and U.S. Representative Sylvia Garcia delivered meals to homebound seniors on Friday through Interfaith Ministries of Greater Houston & Galveston County's Meals on Wheels program.

“What better way to show love to the community ahead of Valentine’s Day than by delivering meals to folks in need. With inflation, food insecurity and costs of living still high, the work that Meals on Wheels does is important now more than ever. We’re all working together to help our community deal with rising costs, and it was a really special experience for Congresswoman Garcia and I to help support Meals on Wheels today,” said Judge Lina Hidalgo.

According to a 2025 report from the Kinder Institute, more than 2 in 5 households in Harris County are food insecure, which is nearly three times the national average. Last year, Meals on Wheels delivered 1,385,654 meals to over 6,000 seniors in Harris County. They also distributed 80,724 pounds of pet food through their Animeals program.

Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo is Harris County’s chief executive and Director of the Harris County Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management. Judge Hidalgo, alongside four county precinct commissioners, oversees a budget of approximately \$5 billion that funds services and institutions for the third-largest county in the nation, home to nearly 5 million people. For more information about Harris County and the Office of the County Judge, please visit: cjo.harriscountytexas.gov.



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CHURCH PAGE

BIBLE WORD SEARCH

by Elie's Spiritual Treasures

Psalm 40:13-14

Be pleased to save me, LORD; come quickly, LORD, to help me. May all who want to take my life be put to shame and confusion; may all who desire my ruin be turned back in disgrace.

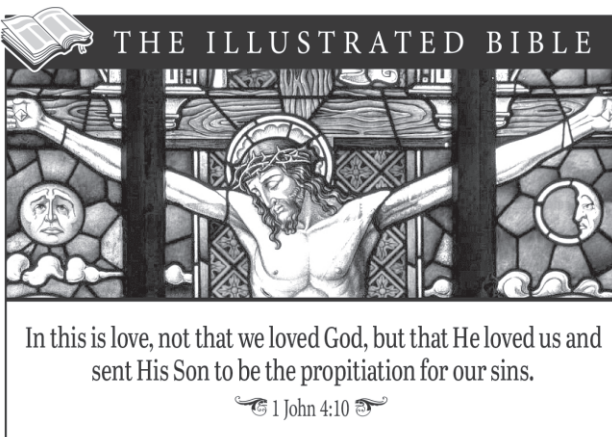
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Find the bolded/underlined words in the diagram. They run in all directions — forward, backward, up, down and diagonally.

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BIBLE TRIVIA

By Wilson Casey

1. Is the book of Gethsemane (KJV) in the Old or New Testament or neither?
2. What's the only book of the Bible that mentions Christ's tomb being sealed? Matthew, Mark, Luke, John
3. From Matthew 28:2, who rolled back the stone from the door of Jesus' tomb and sat upon it? Simon, An angel, Villagers, Disciples
4. When Mary Magdalene and "the other Mary" came upon the risen Jesus, who did He ask them to inform? Priests, Disciples, No one, Villagers
5. From John 20, which disciple doubted Jesus had risen unless he could see the wounds? Peter, Andrew, Thomas, Thaddeus
6. How long did Jesus remain after His resurrection before He ascended into heaven? Instantaneously, 1 hour, 7 days, 40 days

ANSWERS: (1) Neither, (2) Matthew (27:65-66), (3) An angel, (4) Disciples, (5) Thomas (called Didymus), (6) 40 days
 Sharpen your understanding of scripture with Wilson Casey's latest book, "Test Your Bible Knowledge," available in bookstores and online.
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BIBLE WORD SEARCH
 Answers

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NOTICE OF STATUS AND NAME CORRECTION

Be it known that the undersigned, previously designated in records as NIKITA JAMES ISAAC, has corrected the record and affirmed their proper name as Nikita James Isaac. This publication is made for the purpose of correcting the public record and giving constructive notice to all interested parties.
 Dated this 17 day of March, 2026.

Nikita James Isaac

9-4t

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Guz Khan, left, and Riz Ahmed star in "Bait."

"Bait."

"Send Help" (R) — Director Sam Raimi, who has quite the range with films like the "Spider-Man" and "Evil Dead" trilogies, went back to horror for this new survival thriller starring Rachel McAdams ("Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret.") and Dylan O'Brien ("Anniversary"). McAdams plays a corporate strategist named Linda, who gets passed over for a promotion by her boss Bradley (O'Brien) for his fraternity brother. After attempting to get him to change his mind, Linda is offered a seat on his plane to Bangkok for a business trip. However, their plane crashes in the Gulf of Thailand during a storm, and the only survivors are her and Bradley. With their dynamic now turned on its head, Bradley is forced to rely on Linda's insane survival skills to get them off the island. Out now to rent! (Apple TV+)

"The Moment" (R) — This mockumentary film is a satire of British pop artist Charli XCX's life. The version of Charli XCX in this film is very similar to the one we know, who smashed the charts during summer 2024 with her "Brat" album, but viewers get a behind-the-scenes look at the chaotic tail end of her album cycle. After getting hit with shady brand deals and being forced to work with an objectifying and pretentious filmmaker named Johannes (Alexander Skarsgard), Charli is at her wit's end with a project that she now considers "cringe" but must continue to promote. Other celebrities that make cameos in the mockumentary include Kylie Jenner ("The Kardashians"), Julia Fox ("Him") and Rachel Sennott ("I Love LA"). Out now to rent. (YouTube)

"Bait" (TV-MA) — This thriller/drama/come-

dy series not only stars Riz Ahmed ("The Phoenician Scheme"), but it was written by him as well. Ahmed plays Shah Latif, an up-and-coming actor in London who lands his big break as the new James Bond. Now thrust immediately into the spotlight, Shah struggles with the difficult disadvantages of fame, like paparazzi and internet comments, which send him into a bit of an existential crisis. The series feels like a character study on what it's like to suddenly wake up as a celebrity in modern times. All six episodes are out now to stream. (Amazon Prime Video)

"Pizza Movie" (PG-13) — Gaten Matarazzo, known for his portrayal of Dustin in "Stranger Things," leads this comedy film alongside Sean Giambrone ("The Secret Life of Pets 2"). The film follows two college roommates Jack and Montgomery, who find a mysterious box of "mints" in their dorm on a tragically lame night. They discover that these mints are actually hallucinogenic drugs, and with the burden of higher education weighing on them, Jack and Montgomery have no choice as college students but to indulge! But when the high proves to be too intense for them, they learn that the only solution to properly come down is to eat pizza, so viewers watch along as the boys attempt to overcome their trip. (Clearly the writers of this film were high, too.) Look out for appearances from Sarah Sherman ("Saturday Night Live") and Daniel Radcliffe (of the "Harry Potter" franchise) as the Butterfly. Premieres April 3. (Hulu)

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Q: I recently started watching "Arrested Development," starring Jason Bateman and Will Arnett. Why did they recast the actress of Marta? I like both actresses, but I was curious about the change. — D.D.

A: Marta Estrella was a telenovela star who was G.O.B.'s (Arnett) girlfriend but was also loved from afar by his brother, Michael (Bateman). LEONOR Varela originated the role but exited after two episodes to star in a heavy dramatic role for the 2004 movie "Innocent Voices." She was recast with supermodel-turned-actress Patricia Velasquez for an additional five episodes.

Since soap operas are famous for recasting roles, a satiric comedy like "Arrested Development" perfectly turned the role switch into a clever meta joke without giving an explanation.

Q: Are there currently any shows that are filming in Hawaii? The ones I used to watch like "Lost" ended years ago. I just wonder how they're doing with the current bad flooding there. — K.E.

A: The ABC series "Lost" filmed on the island of O'ahu, which is currently experiencing historic flooding. It's currently the location for the upcoming action film "Protecting Jared," which stars Jason Momoa ("Aquaman") and Andy Samberg ("The Roses"). Momoa has been posting pictures of the devastation on his social media and is also actively helping charity organizations to feed hungry residents through this hardship.

Other productions calling Hawaii home include the third installment of the "Jumanji" movies, but it appears that the actors wrapped up filming this month. "Jumanji 3" will once again star Dwayne Johnson ("The Smashing Machine") and Jack Black ("Anaconda"), and it will premiere in theaters on Christmas Day of this year. The live-action "Lilo & Stitch" sequel is expected to begin filming later this year, likely in O'ahu once again.

The Netflix series "Untamed," starring Eric Bana, began filming season two in O'ahu and the Volcanoes National Park this past February. All of these productions will be a boon to the economy of



Patricia Velasquez ("Arrested Development")

our nation's 50th state, which is badly needed not only because of the record rainfall but also due to the 2023 fires in Maui.

Q: Is the new British spin-off of "Saturday Night Live" available to watch for American audiences? I know I can probably find it online, but what about on NBC? — B.M.

A: Tina Fey kicked off "SNL UK" as its first host, but it won't be broadcasted here in the United States on NBC. You can find it the day after it airs live on NBC's streaming service, Peacock. The Brits have always been known for comedy, so I would expect their version to be a huge hit. Like most series from across the pond, the season will be short with just eight episodes.

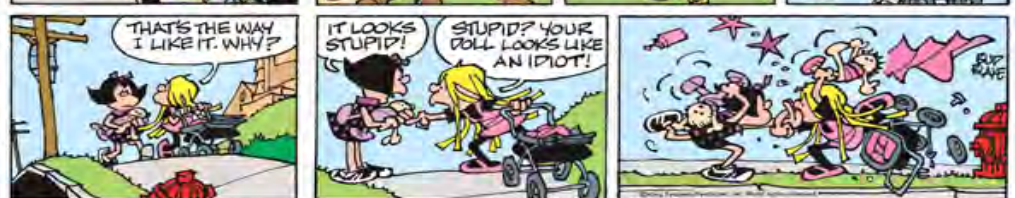
The next two hosts will be Jamie Dornan, the Irish actor best known for starring in the "50 Shades of Grey" trilogy, and Riz Ahmed, who was born in Wembley, England, and was nominated for an Oscar in 2021 for his role as a deaf drummer in "Sound of Metal."

Send me your questions at NewCelebrityExtra@gmail.com.

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ENTERTAINMENT

Amber Waves



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HOCUS-FOCUS puzzle with two panels and instructions

March 30, 2026 Posting Date King Crossword

Crossword puzzle grid and word list (ACROSS, DOWN)

Trivia test by Fifi Rodriguez with 10 questions and answers

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Lone Star College Campuses hold Open House April 7th

Continued from Page 1

at LoneStar.edu/Open-House.

In spring 2024, Lone Star College launched its Full-Year Academic Schedule for students to view a full year of courses. Starting April 14, students can now register for a full year of classes for fall 2025, spring 2026 and summer 2026. This resource will help students get the classes they need, stay on target and finish on time.

Lone Star College's Full-Year Academic Schedule allows students to see their full pathway to completion, giving them a better idea of their progress and what they need to achieve their goals," said Christina

Hagerty, Ed.D., LSC interim chief academic officer. "By planning and registering for courses a full year ahead, students save time and money."

Lone Star College offers a variety of workforce, academic, transfer, continuing education, baccalaureate programs and robust student life activities close to home to assist everyone interested in furthering their education. Registration is now open for the May mini-semester and summer semesters. Fall enrollment begins April 14. Visit LoneStar.edu/Registration for more information.

Lone Star College System enrolls over 90,000

students each semester providing high-quality, low-cost academic transfer and career training education. LSCS is training tomorrow's workforce today and redefining the community college experience to support student success.

Mario K. Castillo, J.D., serves as Chancellor of LSCS, the largest institution of higher education in the Houston area and has been named a 2024 Great Colleges to Work For® institution by the Chronicle of Higher Education. LSCS consists of eight colleges, seven centers, eight Workforce Centers of Excellence and Lone Star Corporate College. To learn more, visit LoneStar.edu.

Armando L. Walle
21h · 🌐

Having a good teacher in each classroom is vital in educating our children. But they must be paid adequately & respected. Appreciate NE Houston @TexasAFT inviting me to participate on your panel. Good to be colleagues @AnaHdzTx & @RepHaroldDutton #txlege

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