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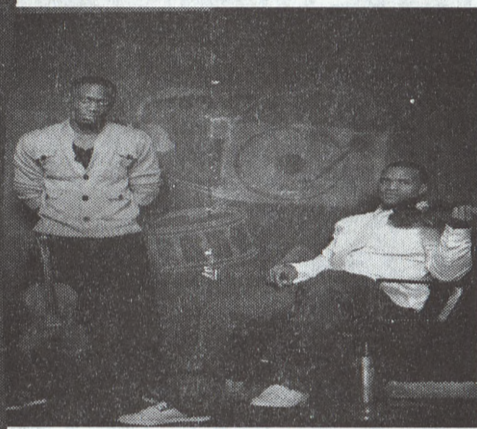
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THE BATT

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AROUND TOWN



The "Arco de Luna" by Steephollow is one of the pieces of artwork in Downtown Bryan meant to fill empty voids with contemporary art.

Shelby Knowles — THE BATTALION

COLLEGE CONTINUED

don't have a whole lot of information yet, but we're just excited about the White House and the president's recognition of the important role that community colleges play, not only to our national education system, but also to the American economy."

Not everyone is ready to greet this proposal with excitement. Autumn Kidwell, Blinn Team freshman, said she does not like the proposal because the students the proposal aims to help already have other means of finding funding.

"I don't think it's a good idea because if you really have the need for free college, a responsible student would be able to look and find scholarships for themselves," Kidwell said.

Bray said any additional resources to make higher education more affordable would not only be beneficial to Blinn, but to the community as well. Bray said this is because making higher education more affordable does not just affect kids looking to go to school, it also affects those looking to get trained for a skill-oriented career.

"It could also, theoretically, help those who are looking for workforce education programs, who want training in some of our programs, our health professions, our nursing programs and career paths such as welding," Bray said. "If it's helping people obtain that kind of training as well so they can quickly get into the workforce and support their families and boost the economy, that would be a tremendous thing for Texas."

Bray said community colleges are of tremendous value in the U.S. education system, and it is difficult to determine exactly how Blinn College will be affected if the proposal goes through.

"We actually put out a press release earlier this year [saying] that if you're enrolled at Blinn College for this academic year, 2015-2016, then you're going to pay just 48.8 percent of the tuition and fees that you would pay at the average Texas public college or university," Bray said. "We're already cutting the cost of the university education in half. I think we would attract even more people for the ability to offer tuition for free."

VISION 2020 CONTINUED

Career Center associate director for graduate student services Katie Stober said providing more avenues for students to secure internships and Ph.D. opportunities is a concern.

"Employers come to me saying we don't hire people who don't have internships or Ph.D. experience," Stober said. "How can we increase the rate of subsequent placement and quality when it seems so many departments are focusing on academic placement only for their Ph.D. students?"

Professor of Meteorology and Texas State Climatologist John Nielsen-Gammon said the current objectives align well with the university's mission, but can go further.

"With what we have so far, I'd like to see — in addition to measuring the satisfaction of our students several years after graduation — satisfaction of their grad school professors and their employers," Nielsen-Gammon said. "Those are the people who really find out how much the students learn and whether the grades they got match up with what they were able to accomplish during school."

Watson said hosting three more forums will provide more opportunities for discussion and revision.

"I think what will happen is if we do this right we will have more discussions and decide if our strategy clearly shows that we are building upon what we're already strong on," Watson said. "I think a lot of people know some of the things they were talking about are going to be in the strategies, but maybe we need to elevate it so it's clearer or higher up."

The remaining forums will take place on Feb. 26, March 13 and April 1 and are open to all faculty and staff.



Tony Trocha-Morelos, Jalen Jones and Danuel House attempt to block a shot at Reed Arena during a 62-50 win over Missouri.

GEORGIA CONTINUED

forward Marcus Thornton, who averages 13.2 points and 7.1 rebounds per game.

Texas A&M (16-6, 7-3 SEC) is tied for second in the SEC with No. 24 Arkansas. The Aggies are led in scoring by juniors Danuel House and Jalen Jones, who average 14.1 and 14 points per game respectively. House is sixth in the SEC from 3-point range, hitting 40.2 percent from beyond the arc. Jones is sixth in the SEC in overall field goal percentage, shooting 48.3 percent.

The Aggies have the SEC's leader in assists, junior guard Alex Caruso, who averages 5.8 assists per game and has a total of 127 this season.

A&M, which hasn't been to the NCAA Tournament since the 2011 season, is projected as a No. 10 seed in the NCAA Tournament by ESPN bracketologist Joe Lunardi. Kennedy said it is important to the players to win in February.

"They understand, they've been there and it hasn't been as big and I told them this will be four years, this is a big game, this is the biggest game that we've had since I've been here," Kennedy said.

Georgia is 4-4 on the road, while Texas A&M is 10-1 at home. Its only loss was the second conference game against No. 1 Kentucky that A&M stretched to double overtime.

When asked how important the effect of the 12th Man is at Reed Arena, freshman guard Peyton Allen said the energy is evident during a game.

"Oh definitely, they can get rocking with us," Allen said. "When we're playing good defense, we can get the momentum behind us and it just carries on with us, and we just keep going. When this place is packed, it's pretty crazy."

Tip-off is at 6 p.m.

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