

LU's Title IX department expands

Maddie Sims
UP editor

Lamar University's Title IX department has expanded their operations to increase visibility on campus. The department works to protect students from sexual discrimination and sexual misconduct.

Title IX coordinator, Monica Ryan, said the expansion process was about a year in the making.

In December 2022, the department was put under the division of vice president of strategic initiative and community relations, Freddie Titus.

"We've expanded the division pretty much by adding more positions," Ryan said. "Prior to now, a single person did Title IX, so now we actually have a department. It's been busy and exciting."

"Now that we have a department, we are actually able to get out and broadcast a lot more of what we do, who we are, where we're located and how to get in touch with us."

Since the expansion, Title IX has been working closely with the Student Health Center, and attends campus orientation along with several on-campus events.

"We're also going to offer workshops," Ryan said. "They're more educational workshops about Title IX and what each of those subjects are, to give a more in-depth definition of dating violence and things like that."

"(At the events), we answer all kinds of questions that all incoming students have. We also have a website that has information on training, our policies, what services we can

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UP photo by Maddie Sims

Title IX coordinator Monica Ryan works in her office in the Small Business Development Center across from the Lamar University Welcome Center.



Photo courtesy of Lynn Lane

Joseph Lyle Taylor plays Ned in LUTD's production of "Landscape with Weapon," in the Studio Theatre.

Lamar theatre explores morality of war

REVIEW
Maddie Sims, UP editor

Ethics, when it comes to war, are a tricky subject which creates difficult decisions and debates. As technology continues to advance, so do the weapons people use in battles.

Lamar University's Department of Theatre & Dance production of "Landscape with Weapon" tackles the heavy topic with wit and pathos.

The main character, Ned (Joseph Lyle Taylor) is an engineer who's programmed the anatomy of starlings into drones. When the government wants to weaponize his invention, his loved ones are shocked at his willingness to comply.

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Artistic Legacy



UP photo by Gracie Anderson

Michael Roqué Collins at the opening reception for "Legacy: The Art of Lowell Daunt Collins and Michael Roqué Collins," on display at the Dishman Art Museum through March 2

Dishman exhibit highlights father, son

Gracie Anderson
UP staff writer

Throughout the years, art has changed to reflect the ever-evolving status of the human condition. In the exhibition "Legacy: The Art of Lowell Daunt Collins and Michael

Roqué Collins," on display at the Dishman Art Museum through March 2, the artists invite us to look into a complicated dreamscape and what it truly means to be human. "I have been really interested in following imagination and the dream state," Michael Collins said. "I am

willing to let the viewer experience the work and find for themselves a new meaning." Lowell Collins died from cancer in 2003, and Michael said the passing of his father had a huge impact on his

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Dining to host 'Delightful' event



UP photo by E.J. McMillen

Dillon Tomlin, Chartwells front of house staffer in the Brooks-Shivers Dining Hall, holds a card promoting the "Delightful" event, set for Feb. 12.

E.J. McMillen
UP contributor

Lamar Dining will host its annual "Delightful" week, Feb. 12- 16, in Brooks-Shivers Dining Hall.

As "Delightful" week approaches, the preparations are in full swing to create an inviting atmosphere at the dining hall.

"We will be utilizing an area of the dining hall that everyone passes by as they enter," Lamar Dining Marketing Manager Jennifer Melnychuk

said. "Our team will decorate, and there will be clear signage describing all the activities and giveaways."

Using vibrant decorations and informative signage, the event will complement the broader goal of nurturing appreciation, fostering active participation, and spreading positivity in the Lamar University community, Melnychuk said. "Delightful" is part Chartwells' "Joyful" campaign. "Our primary focus is our

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QUOTE OF THE WEEK

“Of all forms of caution, caution in love is perhaps the most fatal to true happiness.”

— Bertrand Russell

NOTICE

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offer, things like that. We are currently in the process of updating it to add parenting and pregnancy.”

With the expansion, access to private investigators has increased, which makes it easier to file reports.

“Once I receive a report of sexual misconduct, which includes dating violence, domestic violence and stalking,

I will reach out through email to contact the student and see if they want to meet with me and discuss the incident and what happened,” Ryan said. “Then I would offer supportive measures, which could include counseling or a mutual no-contact order.

“It could even be a change of residence if they live on campus. Say they live in Mor-

ris Hall and they don’t feel comfortable because maybe the other party involved lives in Morris, also. We can actually have their room changed to another hall.”

As part of the Title IX policy, any new staff, faculty and students have to complete a certain amount of training within the first year of school employment.

“Prior to that, (the training) was just going to the website, a class, and/or doing it online,” Ryan said. “Now it’s more of a face to face.”

All employees trained under Title IX are required to make a report if they see any sexual crime or discrimination taking place.

“We’re hoping that more students get involved with it,”

Ryan said. “We’ve been in it for a year now, but in that year, we’ve had a lot of hurdles to overcome and getting the program ready to be broadcasted more. So, it was kind of like building Title IX from the ground up.”

For more information, visit lamar.edu/titleix/index. To file a report, visit maxient.com/reporting-form.php?

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students, and we support their intellectual growth and maturation as well-rounded people steeped in high quality educational programs and expansive experiences,” Lamar Dining Senior Director Bryce Sinclair said. “Our goal is to be a part of Chartwells’ effort to execute 500,000 Acts of Kindness throughout the week. By participating in delivering acts of kindness with our guests and communities, it aligns with

both the university’s values through community and student-focus.”

Feb. 12 kicks off with a heartwarming activity — writing letters to senior citizen centers, Melnychuk said. The event also features a candy buffet station, where students and guests can create their own candy bags, complete with kindness cards.

On Feb. 13, the dining hall will have a surprise lunch

menu, along with an opportunity to pick up a kindness card to share with someone special.

On Feb. 14, attendees are encouraged to share a random act of kindness they’ve completed during the week, with special cards provided. On Feb. 15, participants can indulge their creative side by decorating cookies and sharing them with friends.

To wrap up the week, on Feb. 16, there will be an oppor-

tunity to make dog toys for local shelters, embodying the spirit of kindness to animals.

“I’m excited about the events and all of the different activities that will be available throughout the week,” Kyndall Kelley, New Caney senior, said. “I like that the theme is all about spreading kindness. It brings a really cozy feeling to the dining hall.”

“Delightful” also includes giveaways and treats. Parti-

pants can earn entries into a drawing, with prizes including a \$100 Amazon gift card, and a pizza and movie bundle worth \$60.

“We will post teasers each day about the giveaways, but to fully understand, you will have to join us in the dining hall at lunchtime,” Melnychuk said.

The @LamarDining Instagram will serve as the primary platform for sharing event details.

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Cardinal Portraiture

Artist Olivia Cobb seeks sitters for McNair project

Gracie Anderson
UP staff writer

Olivia Cobb is looking for faces in the Lamar community crowd.

The art major is seeking volunteers to sit for portraits as part of her McNair project.

Cobb is a student in the program, researching old art masters and applying their techniques to her own work.

“My project is completely based off of painting portraits,” Cobb said “I am opening it up to everyone at Lamar — students, faculty and staff. There’s this idea of bringing together the Lamar community through art.

“Painting these portraits will be very interesting for the history of Lamar, because it’s not just pictures being taken.”

Created to honor Ronald E. McNair, the McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program seeks to assist low income, first generation, and under-represented students in their undergraduate studies.

McNair was the second African-American to fly into space and was killed in 1986 when the Challenger space shuttle exploded shortly after launch.

The McNair program is usually

granted to STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) projects, but it is open to anyone willing to put in the hard work, Cobb said.

“I am a painting major and the McNair program helps me to pursue a PhD in the arts,” she said.

Cobb is looking for volunteers to be painted. The sessions would entail brief 30-minute time slots.

“I am interested not just in the Lamar student body, but its population and what’s making up the Lamar culture,” Cobb said. “I will make an effort to make sure everyone who sits for me will (at least) have a print of their painting if not the original itself.”

The goal of Cobb’s project is to take the skills and techniques of painting through the years and apply them to 70 paintings in a year’s span.

As with any experiment involving people, Cobb has to get this approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) before she can move on. All the work Cobb is doing currently is preparation for her actual project.

“The goal is ever growing as I learn and discover,” she said. “I just want to bring people together through art.”

To volunteer, email ocobb@lamar.edu to schedule an appointment.



UP photo by Gracie Anderson

Olivia Cobb works on a portrait in Lamar University's art house. Cobb is recruiting members of the Lamar community for her McNair project.

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art. One of the younger Collins’ more recent works, “Touching the Sky,” highlights the struggle of his father’s disease.

“His survival in the midst of what could be a (scene) right outside of Beaumont — his fingers are touching the sky, and the wind turns black,” Michael said. “In the nanosecond before a nuclear blast, flowers decompose and blow in the wind. There’s petrochemical abstraction all around him.”

A lot of Collins’ work also features motifs of the Holocaust. When he was doing a solo exhibition at the Houston Holocaust Museum he was surrounded by survivors. As he showed one of his larger pieces, “Moonstones at Midnight,” a painting depicting stones in a garden at the Buchenwald death camp, he said he had an interaction that has stuck with him.

“I was lecturing to this group of 60 elderly Holocaust survivors, and this man in a wheelchair started crying,” Collins said. “A caretaker walked up to him to ask why he was crying and he said that he used to weed that vegetable garden. If a person, as a child, survived these death camps, that painting brought all those memories back.”

All through his life, Collins said he has had vivid dreams, and once he started to journal them, he also started to paint them. One instance was the dream that inspired “Garden



UP photo by Gracie Anderson

of Stone Wings.”

“I saw these wings on an archeological dig in the forum of Rome,” he said. “I later had this dream where I went out to this bay and it was surrounded by the wings and these openings for the path of

man, a mythology from Peru. All this beauty came out of these three openings, except man trampled his.”

On the night before Lowell Collins died, he and his son had a similar dream which turned into Michael’s painting

“The Weeping Chair,”

“In the center of the painting is the chair my father spent the last few days of his life on,” Collins said. “I had a really similar dream to his. It was about these train barns on fire. In the brush is his

soul, sweeping up with his ribcage and all of the primitive Mesoamerican art he liked to collect.”

When a viewer walks away from his paintings, Michael Collins said he wishes they leave with the hope of a better tomorrow.

“We can be faced with the most brutal, delicate and horrible circumstances in our family, our jobs, and our life as Americans, yet art is the tissue that binds us and reminds us that being human isn’t always easy,” he said.

The Dishman Art Museum is located at 1030 E. Lavaca on the Lamar University campus. Hours are Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., and Saturday, noon-4 p.m. For more, visit lamar.edu/dishman.

A visitor looks at Michael Roqué Collins' "Moonstones at Midnight," above, during the opening reception of "Legacy: The Art of Lowell Saunt Collins and Michael Roqué Collins" at the Dishman Art Museum, Jan. 26.

Visitors look at Lowell Daunt Collins' "Harbor," right, during the reception.

UP photo by Carlos Viloria



Family fun at AMSET

The Art Museum of Southeast Texas held a Family Arts Day, Presidents Day as well as variety of Mardi Gras themed activities. For more on museum activities, visit amset.org.



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His brother Dan (Orlando Arriaga), is appalled and tries to convince him not to follow through with the project. When Ned begins to express doubts, government agents are soon on his tail.

The brothers are on opposite sides of the coin, which makes it interesting when they discuss how the technology will affect the course of future war. The effects this hypothetical weapon will have feels so real that the audience is pulled into the discussion as well.

Taylor's Ned is fantastic. When his character goes off the deep end, audiences empathize with just how much the decision is tearing him apart from the inside out. Arriaga's Dan plays a great brotherly role, and the two complement each other. His moments of vulnerability especially shine.

Ginger Mouton's Ross is excellent. She exudes confidence and is a

great antagonist to Ned. Even though she is pushing him to sign his invention away, the audience understands her reasoning for doing so. It's all about the money.

Joel Groethe's Brooks is mysterious and shady. He works for British intelligence and this isn't his first rodeo in "persuasion." His interactions with Ned are funny, yet eerie. Upon first meeting him, the audience does not know his intentions, which adds to the tension throughout the play.

Director Amelia Fischer ties it all together, leaving us with thought-provoking questions to think about long after the show is over.

It's a marvelous production with a great cast and story, showcasing how one decision could bring even the most morally sound person into madness.

LUTD's next production is "Dangerous Corner," April 11-14.



Courtesy photo by Lynn Lane

Orlando Arriaga, left, and Joseph Lyle Taylor played brothers Dan and Ned in LUTD's recent production of "Landscape with Weapon" in the eStudio Theatre.



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CARDINAL HOOPS



Lamar guard Chris Pryor goes up for a contested basket against New Orleans University, in the Neches Arena at the Montagne Center, Jan. 29. UP photo by Brian Quijada

Cards on pace for best record in four years

Brian Quijada
UP photo editor

The Lamar men’s basketball team has already secured their best record since the 2019-20 season with a 12-10 overall record, 6-3 in the Southland Conference. LU have won three more games than last season with 10 games left in the regular season.

Before the start of the season, the Cardinals were projected to finish ninth in the SLC having placed 10th the

season prior. The men’s basketball team haven’t made the conference playoffs since the 2020-21 season, when they lost in the semifinals to Abilene Christian University.

Since the Montagne Center changed its name to the Neches Federal Credit Union Arena, the Cards have lost only once and won nine games at home. Unfortunately, the Cards have struggled in away games, going 1-9 overall.

The Cardinals won back-to-back homes games, defeating

SLC pre-season favorites Southeastern Louisiana 74-64, Jan. 27, before blowing out New Orleans, 98-73, Jan. 29. The New Orleans game saw both B.B. Knight and Errol White score career highs in points.

Senior guard Chris Pryor leads the Cardinals in points and assists, averaging 12.3 points per game and 3.6 assists per game. LU center Adam Hamilton leads the team rebounds with 7.1 per game. Lamar sees four players

averaging double digits in points per game.

LU leads the Southland Conference in scoring, averaging 80.6 points per game, and is the only Southland school to average at least 80 points per game. The Cardinals are tied for 30th nationally in bench scoring, with 28.15 points per game. They are tied for 46th nationally in scoring offense, 12th nationally in fastbreak points with 15.9 points per game, and 27th nationally in assists with 16.6 assists per

game.

The Cardinals are one of the Southland Conference’s top three-point shooting teams. LU is currently second in the conference in three-point field-goal percentage, and are also second in averaging 8.3 three-pointers per game.

Lamar will continue to pursue the playoff push with four games at home and five away. The Cardinals next home game is Feb. 10, against Nicholls State University.

Lady Cards challenging for SLC title

Brian Quijada
UP photo editor

The Lamar women’s basketball team are currently sitting in second place in the Southland Conference, going 14-5 overall and 8-1 in conference play. This season, the Lady Cards have been on a tear in the SLC with their only loss against Texas A&M Commerce, 70-73. They are currently on a three-game win streak.

The Lady Cards have a 7-1 record at home and are 6-3 in away games.

Last year, the Lady Cardinals lost to the Southeastern Louisiana Lions in the Southland Conference tournament final. They got their in-season revenge, Jan. 27, beating the Lions 59-45 at Neches Arena,

after being down 11 in the first half. There are now three teams with a 8-1 conference record — Texas A&M Corpus Christi, Southeastern Louisiana and Lamar.

Lamar guard Sabria Dean has won three Southland Conference Women’s Basketball Player of the Week Awards this season. Dean is currently averaging 14.7 points per game and 5.2 rebounds per game. Dean is also averaging 88.5 percent from the free throw line.

LU forward Akasha Davis also received her third Southland Conference Women’s Basketball Player of the Week Award, Jan. 29. Davis is currently averaging 16.1 points per game. Her 10.5 rebounds per game ranks 20th in the nation, and she leads the

team in both statistics.

Against the Southeastern Lions, Davis shot 42.9 percent from the field and 87.5 percent from the free throw line, also recording three steals. This season has seen her set her career high with 29 points against Houston Christian, Jan. 20. Davis also set her career high for rebounds, pulling down 18 against Texas A&M Commerce. She ranks 19th in the nation in total double-doubles and seventh in the country in offensive rebounds per game.

The Lady Cardinals hope to make it back to the Southland Conference tournament finals and seem to be on pace to do just that. They have 10 games left, four at home and five away.



UP photo by Brian Quijada

LU forward Akasha Davis scores from the paint against two SELA defenders at the Neches Arena at the Montagne Center, Jan. 27.

Their next game is away at Incarnate Word University, Feb. 8. The next home game

is against Nicholls State University, Feb. 10. Both games are available on ESPN+.



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Softball aims for one SLC step further

Brian Quijada
UP photo editor

The Lamar softball team begin their season, Friday, against Tarleton State at the Cowgirl Classic in Lake Charles, La. The Lady Cards have a tough schedule to start the season as they don't play a home game until Feb. 25 at the Lamar/McNeese Tournament where they play Niagara University.

LU head coach Amy Hooks said she scheduled tough pre-season, softball's 12th, including playing at three-time defending national champions University of Oklahoma, Feb. 17. The idea is to prepare the team for Southland Conference play.

"More importantly, (we are playing) teams that are going to get us ready and teach us a lot about who we are to get ready for conference," she said. "We have a great SLC, I think. Every year the teams in the conference are getting

better and better. So, scheduling really tough competitions before we get into SLC play is kind of how we map it out.

"We have eight returners from last year's squad that made a pretty good run in the Southland Conference Tournament. We were one game away from the championship game, so we have eight that kind of have that taste left in their mouth, and that hunger and chip on their shoulder to want to come and go further this year."

Cameron Niedenthal is returning for her fourth year. The Port Neches native earned herself a spot on the SLC All Conference team last season.

Coach Hooks has been working to improve the squad alongside the recruiting team. Over the offseason, Lamar acquired 14 new players. Five of the newcomers are transfers from schools such as San Diego State, UNLV and



The Lamar softball team begins its 2024 season Friday in Lake Charles, La. Image credit: LU athletics.

Southern Utah.

"Experience is a big thing and I want to get them in, I want to get them experience in the Southern Conference," Hooks said. "I want them to know our culture is a big thing for us — fitting into the culture. The eight returners have been able to lay that foundation for the 14 new ones — just being relentless every

time we take the field and playing Lamar softball and knowing we're never out of the fight."

Last year's team won their first playoff game since the 2017 season. This season, the Lady Cards are looking to bring home a conference trophy, the program's first.

"Our goal is to win a Southland Conference Champion-

ship," Hooks said. "This is team 12, and in those 12 years we've never won a regular season or a tournament championship.

"From day one, from the meeting, that's been our goal, and every day we take the field, we have that goal in mind — we want to bring the first one ever back to Beaumont."

Baseball sets sights on trophy-winning season

Brian Quijada
UP photo editor

First pitch for the Lamar baseball team will be Feb. 16, in the Mobile Baseball Tournament in Mobile, Alabama. The Cards will go up against Southern Indiana at noon. The Cardinals won't play a home game until March 1, when they will face off against the University of Texas at Arlington at 6 p.m. at Vincent-Beck Stadium.

"We're playing some good opponents, so I think (preseason will) be something that gets us ready," head coach Will Davis said. "Hopefully, we can get off

to a good start and give the home fans something to be excited about when we return in March."

Last season Lamar started the season with a 9-0 run beating Power Five teams such as Kansas State and No. 5-ranked Texas A&M. The season saw the Cardinals go 13-11 in conference and 32-23 overall. They won 19 times at home, only losing eight, and went 10-13 in away games. LU made the Southland Conference tournament, but lost both games. LU allowed eight runs and only scored one in both games.

During the offseason, Lamar

lost Ryan Snell, the Southland Conference Player of the Year, to the MLB Draft where he was selected in the seventh round, with the 195th overall pick. Snell was also SLC All-Defensive team, and a finalist for the Buster Posey Award.

This season Lamar added 19 players, 10 of those being NCAA Division 1 transfers and eight being JUCO transfers. Players hailing from schools such as Rice, University of Houston and Arizona State will be wearing the white and red this season. LU also added two JUCO All-Americans and three all region selections.

"The four-year transfers have the perspective of Division 1 baseball, they've already played it, they've already been down that road so it's nothing really new to them," Davis said. "Some of the JUCO guys are talented, they've just got to get acclimated to Division 1 baseball and, hopefully, that doesn't take too long.

"We have a lot of guys back, and so if we were going to add people in recruiting, we wanted to make sure they were people that could make us better. We were fortunate enough to do that in several areas. We're pretty excited about some of the transfers we have, but we're

pretty excited about a lot of the guys we got coming back. We should have several preseason all-conference players, so it's a nice little blend of the two."

The Cardinal baseball team aspires to make the Southland Conference tournament once again this season, but this time they have their eyes set on a trophy.

"Our main goal is to win a championship, whether it be the regular season or the tournament, or both," Davis said. "Obviously, if we had the choice we'd like to win both, but I don't think we're going to be too happy unless we do that."

Legacy

The Art of Lowell Daunt Collins and Michael Roqué Collins





Photo: Kyra Hall, "Michael Roqué Collins"

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LIGHTING UP NEON CITY



UP staff graphic

49ers to face Chiefs in Super Bowl LVIII

Aaron Saenz
UP contributor

The winter months are every football fans favorite time of the year. There are college bowl games, NFL playoffs and Cowboy fans complaining about how they should’ve been in the big game. All of this culminates in the grand finale, the Super Bowl.

This year’s matchup is between the Kansas City Chiefs and the San Francisco 49ers. They both had completely different paths through the season, but both overcame challenges to get to this point, in a match that is sure to be a spectacle.

The Chiefs had an up-and-down season. They started 6-1 and looked like the Chiefs of the past, except, they weren’t. There were many issues that started getting exploited by teams during the season, which led them to finish with an 11-6 record.

The main issue was the dropped passes by the receiving corp. These mishaps caused the offense to stall and lose momentum on important drives. The Chiefs led the league in dropped passes and drop rate, with 44 out of 597 passes dropped. This may not seem like a lot, but many of these took place in big moments or led to turnovers that cost games.

One of the big reasons the Chiefs were able to stay afloat during the poor offensive performances, was their defense. It is one of the best defenses in the NFL. Defensive coordinator Steve Spagnuolo is one of the best in the business, as he knows how to get a defense fired up. Their pass defense gave up the fourth-fewest passing yards a game. The key for Spagnuolo’s defense is the blitz. He knows how to pressure a quarterback into rushing a throw or making a bad decision.

A big reason the D is so strong is one of the big men in the trenches, Chris Jones. Although he was a contract hold-out in the first game, he was still able to reach 10.5 sacks on the season.

Quarterback Patrick Mahomes is a big reason why the Chiefs are in the Super Bowl

for the fourth time in the past five years. He was drafted by the Chiefs 10th overall in the 2017 draft out of Texas Tech. The Chiefs were looking for the successor to Alex Smith, a decent quarterback who couldn’t seem to get them over the hump.

After one year of sitting on the bench, Mahomes got the starting job and did not disappoint. Since taking over the starting role, the Chiefs have won two super bowls and made it to the big game four times. Mahomes has also won two MVPs. He threw for 4,183 yards this season, along with 27 touchdowns while maintaining a 63.0 QBR, all of which rank in the top 10 at his position.

The man that’s been getting all the buzz on the team this season has been Taylor Swift — oops, sorry, I mean Travis Kelce. Although a lot of this attention has come from his girlfriend, it would be ignorant to let that be only thing that grabs your attention. Since being drafted in 2013 by the Chiefs, Kelce has piled up yards, touchdowns and receptions to put him in the argument for the greatest tight end of all time. Most recently, he broke Jerry Rice’s record for the most receptions in NFL postseason history. This season, Kelce caught 93 passes for 984 yards and 5 touchdowns.

Even with these two superstars, the most important person on the team is head coach Andy Reid. Without him calling plays and managing the

game, the Chiefs would not be in the position they are. This next game may be his biggest challenge, though, as he has to plan for the most talented team in the NFL, the 49ers.

It’s hard to find any weaknesses in this 49ers team. From top to bottom, the roster is loaded with talent on both sides of the ball. They have a top-3 edge rusher, a top-3 linebacker, a great secondary, a top-3 tight end, a top-10 receiver, and the best running back in the NFL. However, their whole offense depends on one man.

Quarterback Brock Purdy is in the driver’s seat, and everything lies on his shoulders. He’s done a great job so far, not just meeting expectations, but exceeding them. He is the perfect underdog story that everyone loves. He was drafted with the 262nd — and last — pick in the 2022 draft. This earned him the nickname “Mr. Irrelevant.” Safe to say, he became relevant very fast. He started off as the third-string quarterback, but quickly became the starter when both QBs ahead of him went down with season ending injuries. He never looked back. He’s had his struggles, but every young quarterback does. All that matters is that he never fails to show up when his team needs him the most. Some people say he’s just a game manager due to the crazy talent around him, but for being just a game manager, he

makes it look “Purdy” easy, finishing the season with 4,280 yards, 31 touchdowns, and an NFL best 72.7 QBR, ranking in the top five at his position.

Stars are all over this team, especially on offense. Tight end George Kittle had the most receiving yards of any TE this season, being the only one to eclipse the 1,000-yard mark. Running back Christian McCaffrey was the best offensive player in the NFL this year. He had the most scrimmage yards and touchdowns in the league, with 2,023 yards and 21 touchdowns.

The star receivers are where the 49ers will get you. Brandon Aiyuk has a team leading 1,342 yards this season, while Deebo Samuel was able to able to get 527 yards after the catch. It’s safe to say they are going to be next to impossible to stop.

On the defensive side of the ball, the 49ers have game wreckers everywhere, but the two that stand above the rest are defensive end Nick Bosa, and linebacker Fred Warner. Bosa has been a wrecking ball ever since he got into the league. Despite drawing double and triple teams every game,

he still recorded 10.5 sacks. Even if the line takes care of Bosa, Mahomes has to be wary of where Warner is lurking. Warner has caused four fumbles and four interceptions, which both rank in the top 10. Warner causes teams to avoid playing in the middle of the field. Players always have to look around to avoid this hard-hitting linebacker.

San Francisco’s coaching staff is perfect at managing all these talents. Head Coach Kyle Shanahan trusts his players to execute the game plan. He is an excellent play caller and always seems to know what the perfect play is. However, Reid is the biggest coaching challenge he will have faced this playoff run.

Both teams had their scares on the way to Super Bowl LVIII, but great teams find ways to win.

All the signs point to the 49ers winning it all, but the Chiefs have Mahomes, which has been enough. Kansas City should aim to get out to a quick start and test the Niners defense with pass plays all around the field. If Kelce can find the open seams, he should be Mahomes’ top target. However, even if the Chiefs execute all this, the San Francisco has a juggernaut of a team. One of their offensive players will have a standout game as long as Purdy does what he’s been doing.

Look for the 49ers to be champions of Super Bowl LVIII, 38-24.





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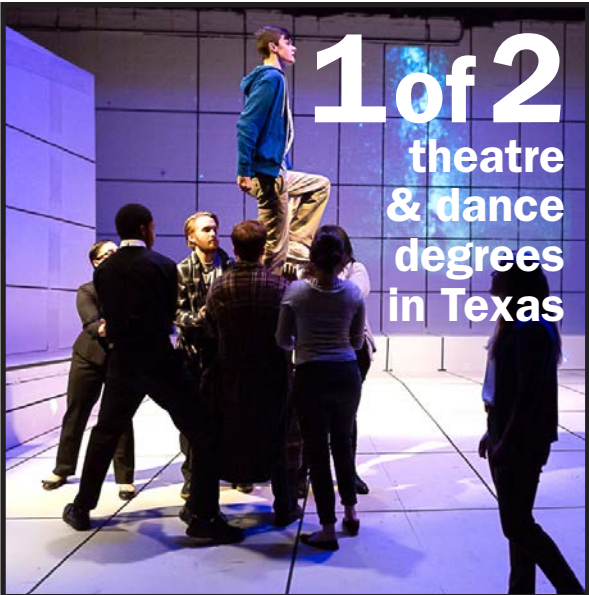
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