

## Booming Good Time

### Museum celebrates 125 years since Lucas Gusher

Rayna Christy  
UP editor

The Spindletop Boomtown Museum celebrated the 125th anniversary of the Lucas Gusher, Jan. 17 with a day of festivities.

The museum offered guided tours and patrons were able to visit the buildings and learn the history behind the Spindletop Blowout, with free merchandise and toys available at tables along the way.

Throughout the day, the Texas Top Gun Re-enactors performed skits, which got patrons involved and excited for the stories the re-enactors told.

Patrons could participate



The Texas Top Gun Re-enactors perform a skit popping a balloon by shooting a blank from a pistol.

UP photo by Rayna Christy

in the Southeast TX Speed-bumps Xtreme Fast Draw competitions. Anyone who could beat prior records was able to write their name on the board.

“So Hype DJs” kept attendees entertained.

In the evening, Shinyribs took the stage. Attendees could be seen singing along and dancing during the con-

cert. Lead singer Kevin Russell kept the crowd engaged and entertained with his dancing and storytelling abilities.

The Boomtown After Dark

tour ended the night, telling stories of Spindletop that patrons had not heard before.

The Spindletop Boomtown Museum is located at 5550 Jimmy Simmons Blvd.

## Historic panels tell history of oil boom

Emily Flores  
UP staff writer

The Beaumont Heritage Society celebrated the 125th anniversary of the Spindletop blowout, Jan. 10, with a ribbon cutting and unveiling ceremony of new interpretive panels displaying details of the Lucas Gusher and its impact.

The entrance to Spindletop Park is located on the east side of 7625 West Port Arthur Road (Spur 93). West Port Arthur Road intersects with Hwy 69 South at Avenue A.

Historian Judith Linsley recounted the story of Lucas Gusher by reading an insert of her co-authored book, “Giant Under the Hill,” that tells the

history of Spindletop.

“Inside the hole responding to the gas pressure below, as he said, as if it were breathing, and every time it rose a little higher until it flowed over the rotary table and then with another roar, shot through the top of the derrick in a stream of oil over 150 feet high,” Linsley said. “Tower springs mound and the field took on the name of Spindletop. By then, Beaumont was in boomtown.”

From hotels, vacant lots and barns everything had become booked months in advance or taken over with tents. Even chairs in barber shops were being rented to sleep in for the night. Beaumont’s pop-

ulation jumped from 10,000 to 50,000 people overnight.

People can experience a recreation of the boomtown at the Spindletop Boomtown Museum on Lamar University’s campus at 5550 Jimmy Simmons Blvd, Beaumont, Texas, 77705.

After Linsley’s speech, Beaumont city councilman Chris Durio read a new proclamation about the event.

“Whereas the Lucas Gusher produced an unprecedented flow of oil, gaining global attention and establishing Texas as a leader in energy production, enterprise, and innovation,” Durio said. “And whereas the events at Spindletop gave rise to new indus-



The Beaumont Heritage Society unveiled new panels about the Lucas Gusher in celebration of Spindletop’s 125th anniversary.

UP photo by Emily Flores

tries, engineering practices, and business models while also shaping the cultural, eco-

nomie, and social identity of

See **PANELS**, page 2

## LUPD rebrands, expands

Emily Flores  
UP staff writer

The Lamar University Police Department has announced its rebranding and integration of resources across campuses to enhance safety and security for universities and colleges in the Texas State University System.

“It’s a way to ensure that everybody is on an equal playing field,” LUPD Sgt. Byron Popillion said. “Ultimately, it’s to make sure the students and faculty staff are safe during times of emergencies.”

The changes driven by are the Texas State University System, a public university system that oversees several institutions in Texas including Lamar University.

The idea is to have stronger communications and more reliable police departments across all campuses by sharing resources to allocate officers



UP photo by Emily Flores

LUPD officers Omar Lopez (left), Shelby Selph and Joshua Morgan sit with Lamar University students Maile Hernandez, Tristan Meleton and Micah Jackson in the Setzer Student Center food court.

to certain locations.

“This change brings better resources, a clearer sense of identity and more meaningful ways to engage with students,” Cody Hicks, LUPD patrol officer, said. “Overall, it allows us

to serve the campus community more effectively and work together with a unified approach.”

LUPD holds the same authority as local police forces but is specialized and geared towards uni-

versities and schools.

Students should expect more presence from peace officers, even for situations people may not expect to be police related, such as

See **LUPD**, page 5



UP photo by Carlos Vitoria

Victor Zaloom speaks at the naming ceremony in Cherry Engineering.

## COE names department for Zaloom

Regina Ruiz  
UP staff writer

The College of Engineering announced the naming of the department of industrial and systems engineering after faculty member Victor A. Zaloom during a ceremony in Cherry Engineering, Jan. 23.

University leaders said the large turnout at the ceremony reflected Za-

See **NAMING**, page 2

Success is not final, failure is not fatal; it is the courage to continue that counts.

— Winston S. Churchill

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## PANELS from page 1

Southeast Texas and the state of Texas.”

Laurie Leister, coordinator for the Jefferson County historical commission, said Spindletop Park is as close as the public can get to the original spot of the Lucas Gusher.

Leister said the park first installed interpretive panels about 25 years ago.

“These panels ensure that

the story of Spindletop is not just remembered but truly understood,” Amy Lovoi, CEO of the Great Beaumont Chamber of Commerce, said. “They connect generations by honoring the people and the risk and the vision that transformed Beaumont and continues to shape who we are as a community.”

A grant was written to replace the panels. Leister said the project began over a year ago. She contacted Shelby

Brannon, executive director of the Beaumont Heritage Society, to write the grant to the Mamie McFaddin Ward Heritage Foundation.

The McFaddin family are one of the three main families who have personal connections to Spindletop. They were part-owners of the land that the Lucas Gusher resides on, alongside the West and Kyle families.

For these three groups, partnership goes further back

prior to Spindletop. Since the late 1800s they have worked alongside each other.

“All of the original families — McFaddins, West and Kyles — are still working together as a team.” Kim Mueller, descendant of the Kyle family, said. “We have a board, and we’re doing everything we can to protect the land and the asset and looking forward to the future development of it.”

Spindletop has also brought years of work in the energy de-

partment for many other families that continue to this day, such as Brannon and Lovoi’s family.

“It brought a lot of innovation to the area, beyond just energy and so it really was a catalyst to change, not just Texas, and not just the nation, but the entire world.” Brannon said. “I also think it’s really important that we remember where all of that started, and Spindletop was largely it.”

## UNIVERSITY PRESS

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loom’s lasting influence at Lamar.

“I’ve never seen a naming ceremony like this,” LU President Jaime Taylor said.

“This speaks to how many people are here and the reason why we’re all here — a remarkable individual whose dedication and generosity have shaped Lamar University for more than four decades.”

Taylor highlighted Zaloom’s role as a mentor, estimating that he has taught

and guided approximately 7,300 students over his career. Many former students, he said, have gone on to become leaders in business, medicine, law and Fortune 500 companies.

“It makes me feel wonderful because of all the wonderful people that came here to help me celebrate the naming of the Industrial and Systems Engineering Department,” Zaloom said. “I don’t know of many departments in the country that are named after

faculty members. Usually, it’s distinguished alumni, so being named after the department that I actually teach in is certainly special.”

He credited much of his fulfillment at Lamar to working closely with students and witnessing their passion.

“I love being around students because of their enthusiasm for life in general,” Zaloom said. “Every semester you get to see a new group of young students, and that enthusiasm is contagious.”

## SCRABBLES by Dalia Osman

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## Division of Student Affairs

### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### FRIDAY, FEB. 13

Show Us Your Red • 11am - 1pm • Galloway 102

#### MONDAY, FEB. 16

Popcorn Mondays • 11am - 1pm • Galloway 102

#### TUESDAY, FEB. 17

Random Acts of Kindness • 10am - 2pm • SSC Ballroom  
Health & Wellness Fair • 10am - 2pm • SSC Ballroom

#### WEDNESDAY, FEB. 18

Coffee & Connect • 12pm - 1:30pm • SSC Ballroom

#### THURSDAY, FEB. 19

Red Flags: Healthy Relationships Workshop  
12:30pm - 2pm • SSC Ballroom

#### FRIDAY, FEB. 20

Show Us Your Red • 11am - 1pm • Galloway 102

#### SUNDAY, FEB. 22

LU Dance Team Audition Prep Clinic  
12pm - 4pm • Rec Center  
*Register at [lamar.edu/danceteam](http://lamar.edu/danceteam)*

#### MONDAY, FEB. 23

Popcorn Mondays • 11am - 1pm • Galloway 102

#### TUESDAY, FEB. 24

LifeShare Blood Drive • 9:30am - 3:30pm • SSC Cypress 125

#### WEDNESDAY, FEB. 25

Career Prep Rally • 3pm - 5pm • Galloway 102

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# SEAHAWKS TO SOAR

## Seattle will be too strong for Pats in Super Bowl LX

The big game is set. The New England Patriots will face the Seattle Seahawks in Super Bowl LX.

The two teams have taken different journeys to get to this point, but their dreams of glory are still alive. The game will be played in Santa Clara, California, and kickoff is slated for 5:30 p.m. CST.

This Super Bowl is the most unlikely matchup in more than 50 years. According to BetMGM, the Seahawks entered the season with 60-1 odds, tied for 10th out of 15 teams in the NFC. The Patriots had worse odds, entering the season with 80-1 odds, tied for ninth in the AFC.

Nobody believed either team had the resources necessary to even win a playoff game, much less make the Super Bowl.

The Patriots have been able to return to their former glory this season. Since star QB Tom Brady left, the Patriots have one playoff appearance and are coming off back-to-back four-win seasons. They've struggled to find a franchise quarterback and a coach to lead them into the future.

Luckily, they found both in the past two seasons.

Second-year quarterback Drake Maye broke out this season. The 2024 third-overall pick led the NFL in quarterback rating. Maye totaled 4,394 yards and 31 touchdowns, good for fourth and third in the NFL. Maye totaled an extra 450 yards on the ground and four rushing touchdowns. He also has the second-best odds to win the Most Valuable Player award.

Maye's play throughout the season has been a major reason why the Patriots were able to propel themselves to the Super Bowl.

Head coach Mike Vrabel was the Patriots homerun hire this past offseason. Vrabel is the previous head coach of the Tennessee Titans, who have gone into disarray since firing him.

Vrabel also has past ties to the Patriots organization, as he

### Commentary



**Aaron Saenz**  
UP sports editor



UP graphic created with Microsoft CoPilot

won three Super Bowls with them as a player in the early 2000s.

He is known as a player's coach. After every game you can always catch him waiting outside the locker room and giving every player a high-five before going in. His voice and scheme have helped the team perform the best they can.

The Seattle Seahawks were led by their star quarterback and receiver duo. The one catching all the passes is Jaxon Smith-Njigba, who led the NFL in receiving yards with a staggering 1,793 yards across 17 games.

The receiver also totaled 10 touchdowns and 119 receptions on the year, both good for top six at the position. He is currently the favorite to win the Offensive Player of the Year award.

Njigba's insurgence came after the Seahawks traded away their previous top receiver, DK Metcalf. Some questioned the move at the time, but Njigba ran away with the opportunity and the Seahawks offense got better than in past years.

Seahawks quarterback Sam Darnold had an unorthodox journey to get to this point. Darnold was drafted by the New York Jets in 2018 with the third-overall pick. He was shaky at best, finishing his stint there with 39 interceptions in just 38 games.

He was traded to the Carolina Panthers after three seasons. It would be much of the same for Darnold there, as he served as the backup for most of his stint. After two seasons,

he left Carolina for the San Francisco 49ers in free agency, signing to be Brock Purdy's backup.

A year of no expectations allowed Darnold to properly develop and learn. After one year of sitting on the bench with the 49ers, Darnold signed with the Minnesota Vikings, and this was where his breakout season came.

Darnold led the Vikings to a 14-3 season along with totaling 4,319 passing yards and 35 touchdowns. Unfortunately, Darnold performed poorly in their only playoff game which was enough for the team to move on to a different quarterback.

However, this allowed Darnold to find a home in Seattle. In his first season with the Seahawks, Darnold totaled 4,048 passing yards and 25 touchdowns, both good for top 10 in the league. He also led the Seahawks to the best record in the NFL at 14-3.

His perseverance and com-

mand of the offense make his story somewhat fairytale-esque heading into the big game.

Both the Patriots and Seahawks have top-10 defenses and offenses, according to yards allowed and yards gained across the regular season.

Both teams defenses have shown off in the playoffs, as the Patriots are allowing the fewest yards per game and the Seahawks have the best turnover differential.

When looking at the stats, it is also important to consider strength of schedule. The Seahawks had a much tougher schedule and path to the Super Bowl than the Patriots. The Patriots faced three playoff teams across their 17-game season and played one twice. They finished 2-2 in those games.

The Seahawks faced six playoff teams and played two

twice, going 6-2 in these games.

Additionally, out of the 17 opponents the Patriots faced, 11 did not bring back their head coach for next season. This lackluster schedule has caused many to question whether the Patriots are good or fraudulent.

People should give more credit to the Patriots, but this playoff run is extremely ahead of schedule. By no means is the team bad, but they took advantage of a weak and injured AFC schedule and playoff schedule.

The Seahawks have many seasoned veterans and have shown they can compete with the best of the best all season.

Ultimately, the depth and experience of the Seahawks will boost them to hoist the Lombardi Trophy. They have playmakers all over the field on both sides of the ball that the Patriots won't be able to keep up with.

Look for the Seahawks to win 31-21.

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# FACES OF THE RIO GRANDE

## Dishman hosts Corpus' drawings about immigrant experience

**Maria Rodriguez**  
UP news editor

The rushing water and shadows of tree branches of the Rio Grande come to life in Luis Corpus' exhibition, "The Tether that Binds Us."

The show is on display at the Dishman Art Museum until April 2.

Corpus was inspired by wanting to communicate the truth he knew surrounding the communities along the border. He started the collection in the summer of 2017 after gathering materials. He made a Facebook post seeking a Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals recipient to highlight.

"I mean, they've been here since they were little kids," Corpus said. "Mexican-born, been here since they were little kids. And then in my classes, there were some of the best kids in that class, and they communicated that sense of the in-between very well, and counter all this negative stereotype rhetoric — they are on the straight and narrow."

Kids don't think twice about the way they grow up, Corpus said.

"When you grow up, whether you grow up in poverty, whatever the thing is, you're joyous," he said. "It's not until you get a little bit older, and you have to really establish yourself. You will encounter things that you know through no fault of your own. I'm pushing and I'm trying and I'm striving."

The challenge continues as kids go to college, Corpus said.

"My dad stopped going to school at second grade," Corpus said. "My mom at fifth grade. How are they going to help me navigate college? They can't, even if they wanted to. They don't have that foundation."

"We have more in common with people who are growing up poor than we do (with those) who don't understand what it's like to deal with it."

Despite that, Corpus said he was blessed in many ways, and his family held similarities to other families.

"I also realized that if you re-

move all this context — who we are, where we come from, the language, the culinary, because I love me, some beans, tortillas, all that stuff — but you remove it, and we're just a regular, every day, typical run-of-the-mill American family, because everybody is just trying to get by."

Corpus' previous encounters with the Rio Grande were crossing its bridges. However, to gather materials, he knew he would have to go to the riverbank, posing a challenge.

"It's just the uncertainty of what to expect when I go down there," he said. "Also working with the materials itself, because it's an unconventional method, trying to figure out a technique that was going to work to be able to create the images was a bit difficult."

Using the water from the river came after a lot of thought, Corpus said. The initial use of drenching before drawing softens the paper; drawing would scrape the paper.

"I then started using some sandpaper and using it to soften up the charcoal, to make a charcoal powder," he said. "And then use the water to create that marbling."

The Rio Grande is a physical barrier between the U.S. and Mexico. The byproduct is the people living in the U.S. keeping their culture alive.

"It's an integral part of me, and I think, with the river, it looks really calm, classic, but that water will take you," Corpus said. "There's such that duality. And the fact that it does exist in between two countries, I think it serves as a metaphor that allows us to remain dignified."



The first drawing of Luis Corpus collection features one of Corpus' former students was completed in 2017.

Chloe Thompson, Dishman Art Museum administrator organized the exhibition after meeting Corpus at the Texas Art School Association.

"The main reason I brought this show is because I want people to understand that they have a place here," Thompson said. "They are loved; they are safe. We appreciate them and value them."

The political climate and lack of Hispanic voices in public media spoke to Thompson, she said.

"I wanted to give a platform for more immigrant voices,"

Thompson said.

Corpus said he understands the exhibition might not be for everyone. However, he hopes people look at the drawings and respond to what is being depicted.

"Then if they care to read the artist's statement, and realize what the work is about, I want to hope they rethink any biases that they might have, at least question it themselves," he said.

The Dishman Art Museum is located at 1030 E. Lavaca St. Admission is free.

For more visit, [lamar.edu/dishman](http://lamar.edu/dishman).



UP photos by Maria Rodriguez

Attendees look at Luis Corpus' large-scale drawings during the opening reception of "The Tether That Binds Us" at the Dishman Art Museum, Jan. 23.

## DISHMAN ART MUSEUM

LUIS CORPUS  
THE TETHER THAT  
BINDS US

### EXHIBITION DATES

January 23<sup>rd</sup> - April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2026

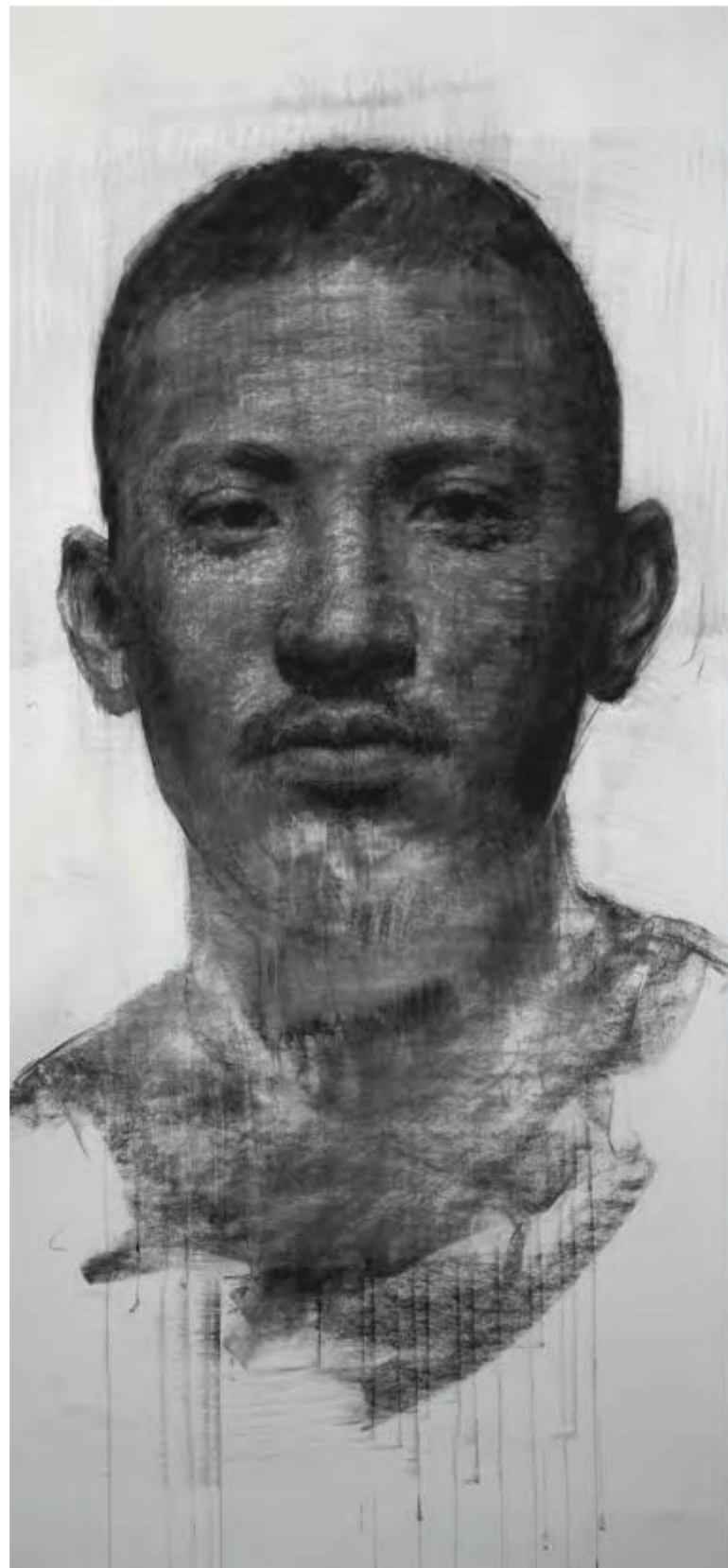
### MUSEUM HOURS

**Monday - Friday**

**9 AM - 4 PM**

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the  
tether  
that  
binds  
us

an exhibition by  
luis corpus

**LUPD** from page 1

jumpstarting dead batteries and retrieving keys locked in cars. If the problem is beyond what the police can help with, they will advise students and faculty to the best options.

“One thing students should know is that these changes are designed to improve their experience,” Hicks said. “Including easier access to service, better reporting options, a greater presence on campus, and faster response times to emergencies.”

Changes will also be seen in the police department’s gear.

“As a collaboration, we do believe it is only right to develop something that blends all campuses that we serve, although nothing is set,” Sgt. Yatra Martin said.

Byron said people will see police vehicles designed a bit differently and the uniforms the officers wear will also be changed.

But what won’t change is that dedication to the safety and security of all the faculty, students and staff on each campus, Byron said.

The new implementations have also affected LUPD per-

sonally.

LUPD has expanded to the Lamar State College-Orange and Lamar State College-Port Arthur campuses allowing officers to work across multiple campuses. This change is possible because there is a coordinating schedule, a shared dispatch center and consistent meetings with supervisors to communicate feedback to keep this new process expanding in the right direction.

“Immediately, I have seen welcoming smiles from staff and faculty,” Sgt. Yatra Martin said. “We have assisted in areas and situations that staff were previously unaware of how to handle.”

Officers are also undergoing new training to strengthen skills and understanding for every campus. The training will be ongoing to make sure the department stays on top of new approaches to keep campuses safe.

For some officers, like Hicks, the change has brought more responsibilities and a new partner.

“I recently transitioned into a K-9 officer role and was assigned a K-9 partner named Sandy, a

golden retriever,” Hicks said.

“Sandy is being trained in emotional support response and victim assistance, with a focus on providing comfort to individuals experiencing emotional distress, trauma, or crisis situations.”

Popillion said LUPD also helps students who are looking for law enforcement experience with paid internships.

“They check buildings, lock them and assist with a safety escort if somebody doesn’t feel safe walking,” Popillion said. “They assist with large scale events like basketball or football games by checking bags and doing security at those locations.”

The department takes it one step further by covering the cost for the College Police Academy if the student is selected into the program. Students will still be paid for their internship for the duration of their education at the academy.

Changes will continue over the next few months and LUPD hopes to see the rebranding finished by the end of this spring semester.

For more information, visit [universitypolice.lamar.edu](http://universitypolice.lamar.edu).



LUPD officer Omar Lopez, right, and LU student Micah Jackson shake hands in the Setzer Student Center food court.



LUPD patrol officer Cody Hicks stands with his K-9 partner, Sandy, far right, at Lamar State College Port Arthur.

UP photos by Emily Flores



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# Girls' Haven opens new facility



UP photos by Rayna Christy

A Girls' Haven flag waves, above, as faculty gather alongside community members to cut the ribbon for the new facility, Jan. 14. The event drew dignitaries including Beaumont Mayor Roy West, right.

**Rayna Christy**  
UP editor

Girls' Haven held a ribbon cutting ceremony for its new facility, Jan. 14. The building is the first purpose-built foster care residence in Texas.

Girls' Haven was founded in 1994 to support girls struggling with difficult circumstances, according to the organization's website. The organization also helped to create the related Ehrhart Charter School to provide education to the residents with a wraparound model.

The event featured multiple speakers before the ribbon was cut and the community was able to tour the new facility.

"We started about 30 years ago, like many dreams that started with a simple hope that we could provide a safe place for girls who needed stability, care and love," Rozanne Blount, founding member and current board member, said. "LaNell Wilson and I, along with other friends, dreamed of the lives that might be changed, futures that can look a little brighter — but I never could have imagined the impact this mission would have today.

"Standing here, I'm incredibly humble and proud. What began as a vision has become the first building in the state of Texas designed from the

ground up to serve as a general residential operation for foster care. That alone is something worth celebrating."

Blount said the Ehrhart Charter School has expanded its reach and received the only A rating in the region. Ehrhart serves 600 students in the community, from Pre-K to 12th grade.

Former Girls' Haven resident Tiffany Jackson spoke about her experience with the organization.

"I didn't know a lot about life, I knew a lot about pain," Jackson said. "Once I got to Girls' Haven, I felt and experienced a familiar environment that I'd never had before."

A proclamation issued by the Greater Beaumont Chamber of Commerce was read to commemorate the new facility.

"This is not just about a new building," Jay Wilson, Greater Beaumont Chamber of Commerce director of membership and retention, said. "It represents a continued commitment to providing safety, care and opportunity for young lives that deserve nothing less."

To learn more about Girls' Haven's mission, visit [www.girlshaveninc.org](http://www.girlshaveninc.org), or their social media accounts on Facebook and Instagram.

To support the mission, click "Donate Today" on the Girls' Haven website.



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**NEW LOCATIONS COMING SOON**

# LU pitcher gains US citizenship

**Caraline Otte**  
UP staff writer

On top of being a full-time student and college baseball player, graduate senior A.J. Kostic obtained his United States citizenship in June.

The business management major was born and raised in Calgary, Alberta in Canada. He also lived in Queensland, Australia when he was seven. At 13, he and his parents moved to Surprise, Arizona.

“My parents wanted to give me a better chance to play baseball, somewhere where there’s more opportunity,” Kostic said. “And we wanted to get out of Canada to be in warmer weather.”

Kostic said obtaining his citizenship journey has been a decade-long journey.

“I got sworn in in June, but the process took a lot longer,” he said. “Before the process started, we could only stay in America for six months a year, so we were going back and forth. Once we got our green card, we had to basically prove that we could live in America for eight years without committing a crime or anything. Once you pass that, there’s a naturalization step, you file for citizenship and then you take the test. So, it’s a long process.”

A part of obtaining citizenship includes an interview process, Kostic said.

“You have to go in and get interrogated, and they like you to be very serious,” he said. “They asked me, ‘Are you a terrorist? Do you plan to practice polygamy? Is this really what your parents are doing here?’ It’s really weird.”

After passing the test and

being sworn in, he said he is proud to officially call himself an American.

“After living in two other countries — they were good countries, too — I see America is overall a better place to live,” he said. “There’s this ability to be successful here that is better than any other country and I’m glad to be a part of that. And I mean, it was also cool that I can actually vote now.”

Throughout his college career, he has lived in Michigan, Montana and Texas.

“I think Texas is great,” he said. “It definitely has the most strength and pride as an individual state. Texas is self-sufficient and I think a lot of people love that.”

Living across the country from his family for the past six years has been a challenge for him and his parents, Kostic said.

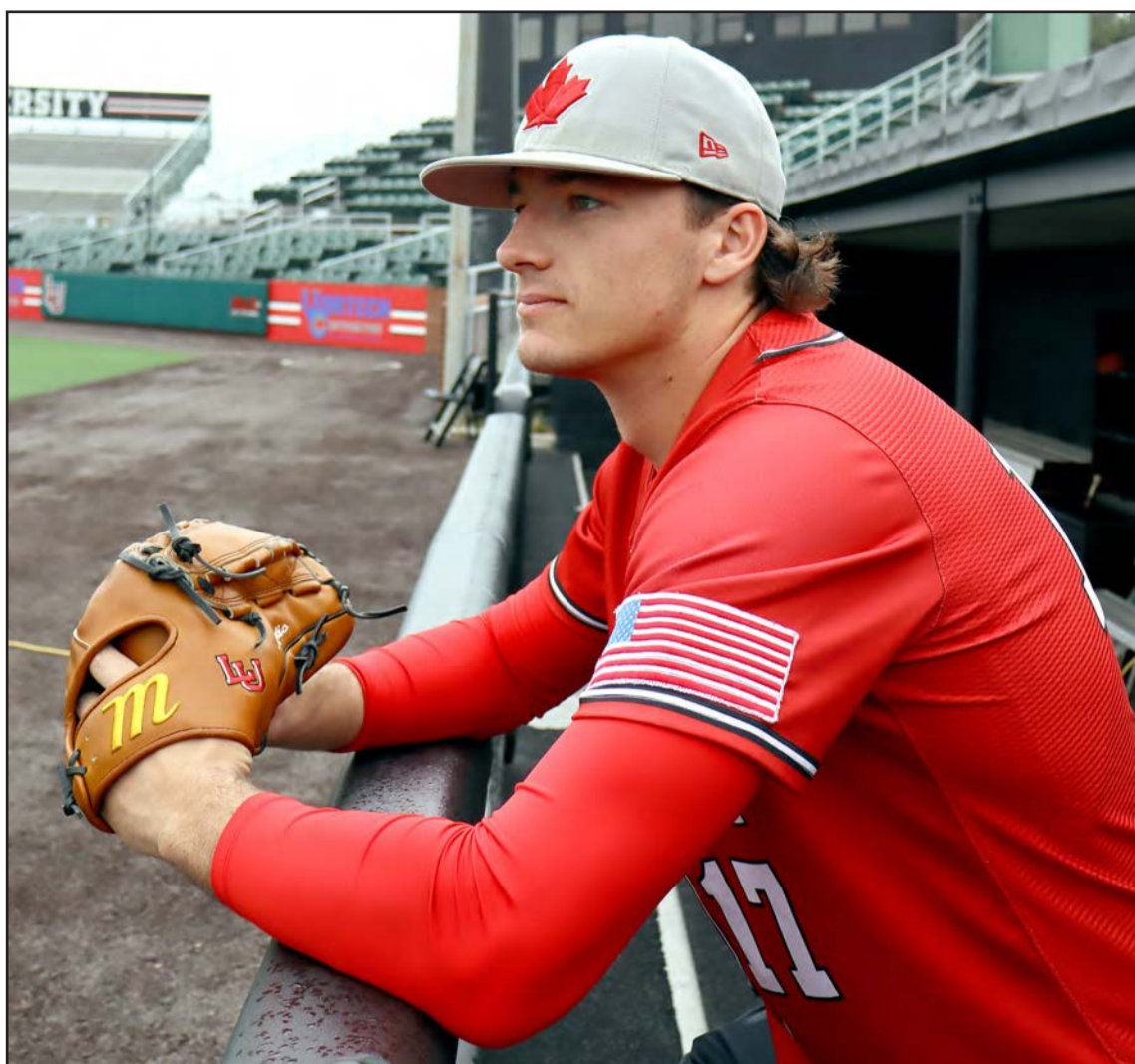
“I’m kind of used to it by now, but it’s definitely hard,” he said. “I call them every night. I’m an only child, so that gets hard on them, especially my mom.”

Kostic said that his father has been a big influence.

“I think I lean on him the most,” he said. “He really got me more into my faith in Jesus and what it meant to be a believer. A lot of people change who they are in college and fall off, but he helped me navigate through all that.”

He said he plans to pursue baseball after graduating.

“There’s the MLB draft in July, and if you don’t get drafted, you can sign as a free agent and go play for the minor league teams, or you can play overseas,” he said. “But I don’t know if I really want that. I’d



UP photo by Caraline Otte

Lamar University pitcher A.J. Kostic looks out across Vincent-Beck Stadium. Kostic, a Canadian native, recently earned his U.S. citizenship.

love to go to Japan, but I’d rather try to make a minor league team first.”

Kostic said he plans to use his masters in business for a nutrition company.

“I got a patent for the first effervescent creatine tablet,” he said. “I’m going to use it to grow my company I started called Cre Nutrition.”

Kostic said he is looking forward to his time at Lamar and what the university offers him.

“I think that’s what I’m most excited for, the baseball season,” he said. “I’ll get my master’s degree here, too, so that’s kind of sweet.”

He is able to play through six years of eligibility due to time off for injuries. He has had knee, elbow and facial reconstruction surgeries.

“The elbow was probably the hardest one — it took over a year to recover,” he said. “I blew it out in the middle of a

game on ESPN, and my mom was watching back home. That was my biggest obstacle. It made me lean on my faith more. But it made me stronger.”

Kostic will pitch for the Cardinals this spring, kicking off the season with a home series against Oakland University, Feb. 13.

The full spring schedule is available at [lamarcardinals.com/sports/baseball](http://lamarcardinals.com/sports/baseball).

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# CATCHING UP WITH CARDINAL SPORTS

**Aaron Saenz**  
UP sports editor

While students were home for the holidays, Cardinal athletes were competing hard in their respective sports. From new seasons beginning to the Cards being on national television, there was a bit of everything.

### Men's Basketball

The Lamar men's basketball team had a nationally televised game on CBS against McNeese on New Year's Day. The Cards lost the game to the Cowboys, but were able to showcase their talent to the nation. This won't be the only time the Cards will be on CBS, as their Feb. 23 game against Nicholls will also be aired nationally. Junior Rob Lee Jr. was named Southland Conference Player of the Week for Jan 11-18 after averaging 25.5 points and 6.0 rebounds. He also scored a career-high of 31 points against Houston Christian.

The Cardinals had their rematch against the Cowboys, Jan. 31. The game ended in heartbreaking fashion, with the final score being 64-63 in favor of McNeese. Despite the loss, Lee Jr. finished the game with 25 points and sophomore Braden East finished with 13 points and 13 rebounds, his fourth consecutive game with a double-double.

The Cardinals are 11-11 overall, 6-7 SLC.

### Women's Basketball

The Lady Cards basketball team's seven-game winning streak came to an end after their matchup against McNeese, Jan. 31. The final score was 64-52. Three different Cardinals scored in double figures, but the 22-point half-time deficit was too much to overcome. The Lady Cards play again on Thursday against Northwestern State at home.

The Cardinals are 13-7 overall and 10-3 in conference.

### Track and Field

The Lamar track and field indoor season is in full swing, as they have



Lamar's Rob Lee Jr., left, drives during the Cardinals' 64-63 loss to McNeese, Jan. 31, in the Neches Credit Union Arena at the Montagne Center.

Lamar's R'Mani Taylor, below, shoots a floater during the Lady Cards 64-52 loss to McNeese, Jan. 31, in the Neches Credit Union Arena at the Montagne Center.

UP photos by Gerrod Fuller

competed in three meets in Houston and Albuquerque, New Mexico, with their most recent being the Robert Platt Invitational in Houston, Jan. 30-31. Sophomore John Sanderson broke his own 60 meter-hurdles school record twice. He first set it in the semifinals with a 7.91, then came back for the finals and ran a 7.86, good for second place. Both the men's and women's 4x400m relay teams finished in third.

### Softball

The Lady Cards softball season begins at the LSU Tiger Classic, Thursday. The three-day tournament features matchups against power four teams like NC State, Illinois, and LSU, along with a match against Nevada.

### Baseball

The Lamar baseball team opens their season on Feb. 13 with a three-game homestand against Oakland. The team recently hired Jace Hutchins as the new pitching coach. Hutchins started off his coaching career as a stu-

dent assistant with the Texas A&M Aggies before working his way up all the way to the big leagues.

Prior to taking the Lamar job, he was a pitching development coach with the Chicago Cubs.

### Men's Tennis

LU sophomore transfer Maxwell Lindstedt picked up two wins in the second match of a doubleheader, and three wins on the day, as Lamar University recorded a split against nationally ranked Lubbock Christian Sunday at the Thompson Family Tennis Center.

The Cardinals dropped the morning match, 4-3, to the Chapparals but rallied right back to take the nightcap by the same score.

### Women's Tennis

Lamar University pushed its win streak to four Sunday after sweeping a doubleheader against Lubbock Christian. The Cardinals won both matches by identical 4-1 scores.



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