

THE SKIFF



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UNDERSTANDING

A STUDENT MEDIA PUBLICATION OF TEXAS CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

FORT WORTH, TEXAS



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PHOTO BY HEESOO YANG

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CAMPUS NEWS

Online-only weekend classes announced to make up for winter storm cancellations

BY BENTON MCDONALD
EXECUTIVE EDITOR, TCU360

Three Saturday class dates have been added to the semester calendar after unprecedented winter weather canceled most classes last week.

The makeup dates were announced by Provost Teresa Abi-Nader Dahlberg in an email to faculty and students Wednesday.

Saturdays March 20, March 27 and April 10 will be the makeup days for the classes cancelled from Feb. 17 to Feb. 19.

The online-only makeups can be delivered synchronously or asynchronously.

Dahlberg said the dates were chosen after discussions with the Provost Council, Faculty Senate, Student Government Association and Graduate Student Senate.

Notably, they do not conflict with next month’s Spring Refresh. The refresh is a planned three-day off period from Mar. 8 to Mar. 10.

Student body president Paige Shiring said she pushed for classes to not be held over the refresh.

“I’m really pleased that admin not only took our opinions as students into account but really listened and actively wanted it to make that decision,” she said.

Faculty Senate Chair Sean Atkinson echoed Shiring in a statement to TCU360.

“I’m glad that



PHOTO BY HEESOO YANG

TCU announced makeup dates for classes after last week’s unprecedented winter weather.

“I was dead set on not having any classes over Spring Refresh and I just know that undergrads would much prefer it that way. It was really cool that that was what ended up happening.”

PAIGE SHIRING
STUDENT BODY PRESIDENT

students, faculty and staff were consulted and included in the process of determining how to make up the days missed last week,” he said. “Though there were no really great solutions, this approach at the very least preserves the Spring Refresh with the least amount of impact on the last few weeks of the semester.”

Not holding makeup dates near the end of the semester due to concerns about overburdening was also considered, Dahlberg wrote.

The cancellations needed to be rescheduled due to university regulatory requirements under the U.S. Department of Education and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges that require a minimum number of class hours to deliver.

All in-person and online classes were canceled for four full days due to winter weather in Texas.

All classes resumed Monday. The Mary Couts

Burnett Library has remained closed due to ongoing repairs related to weather damage.

According to a TCU spokesperson, a leak began in the library on Feb. 15. The “flood zone” includes the first, second and third floors of the library’s west side.

The entrance to the west side will be closed until further notice, according to the university. Plans are being developed to ensure access to books and other materials.



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CAMPUS NEWS

‘Hamilton’ stars talk Broadway, rejection in virtual event

By **ALEXANDRA LANG**
EXECUTIVE EDITOR, THE SKIFF

“Hamilton” actors Christopher Jackson and Jonathan Groff discussed the hit musical, their careers and life advice in a virtual event with TCU students Friday.

The event was put on by the student organization theEnd, and moderated by D’Mariel Jones, a junior musical theatre major.

Jackson, who portrayed President George Washington, and Groff, who played King George III, answered questions sent in over social media and from members of theEnd.

The actors recounted the most exciting celebrities who came to see the show during their time performing. Groff gushed about meeting Beyoncé and Jay-Z, while Jackson raved about two celebrities in particular.

“My first one is Meryl Streep because we kicked it for, like, an hour,” Jackson said. “And the other was Kareem Abdul-Jabbar. He’s the most random, weird dude I’ve ever met in my life.”

They discussed their experience in “Hamilton,” and both praised their castmates for their immense talent and dedication to their craft and their characters.

“Everyone in this show is so committed to what they’re doing; that has something to do with the show, obviously, but also has something to do with each individual artist,” Groff said. “The group that they assembled, when it came to being on

stage and doing their job, they were so into it.”

Jackson echoed his castmate’s sentiment, comparing the cast to the 1992 U.S. Olympic “Dream Team.”

“In 1992, the best basketball players in the world played on the Olympic ‘Dream Team,’” Jackson said. “The idea that this show was kind of that, is kind of insane.”

One of the major topics of the conversation centered around the idea of rejection. Jackson argued that viewing setbacks as rejection is unproductive.

“All of the things that go into whether or not you get an opportunity to do a role has nothing to do with acceptance or rejection,” Jackson said. “If you don’t think about things in terms of being accepted or rejected, now you’ve not put your ego in the same spot as your career.”

Groff agreed and shared a recent incident when he grappled with feeling rejected.

“Last week I had a meeting with these two directors, and I felt rejected by them when the meeting was over,” Groff said.

He then explained how he was able to process his emotions.

“I just tried to close my eyes and be, like, ‘Oh my God, okay, this feeling does not go away; it does not matter how old you get, it doesn’t matter how successful you are or you aren’t,’” Groff said. “Let me take a deep breath, let me live in the way this feels... and then slowly, like the



PHOTO COURTESY OF AP

“Hamilton: An American Musical” at the Richard Rodgers Theatre is closed during Covid-19 lockdown May 13, 2020, in New York.

weather, it just starts to change again.”

Bringing in the talent

Maggie Tucker, the head director of theEnd and a senior secondary education and teaching major, explained the process of the club bringing talent to TCU with the help of Student Activities Coordinator Kelly Lee.

“[Lee] actually gets a list of students’ opinions and ideas on who we want to bring to campus,” Tucker said.

After that, Lee takes the list to different talent agencies to see which celebrities fit within the organization’s budget and timeframe.

Tucker said that theEnd was able to book Groff and Jackson after the club was approached

by a talent agency the group worked with in the past.

“Our talent agency actually approached [Lee] with a really cool opportunity that they were interested in doing this, and they were available during our timeframe that we had open, so we worked really close with their managers and talent to... figure out the logistics of how that would happen,” Tucker said.

Tucker said that, during COVID-19, theEnd has been “very successful” in making the transition between in-person and virtual shows, and they’ve been trying to bring more interactive elements to the new format.

Tucker said she was happy with how the event went and noted

in particular the clear connection between Jackson and Groff.

“Everything they said was very down-to-earth and surreal, and they were just laughing with each other and it seemed very casual, which also made it more comfortable for us as viewers,” Tucker said.

Looking forward on Broadway

Groff and Jackson also reflected on what changes they hoped to see on Broadway in the future, especially given the recent political and social movements in recent months.

“I want to see somebody write something new, from a different perspective — from a perspective that I haven’t experienced.

And that’s the show that I want to be in,” Jackson said.

Jackson emphasized Broadway has a responsibility to tell more stories about people of color.

“There are no more excuses. Black folks can bring the money—and they can bring the audiences. And they can tell the story,” Jackson said.

Groff said he hoped the musical’s release on film will encourage more people to “raise the bar” and create more groundbreaking and unique shows for Broadway.

“I want to see original work, I want to hear new music, I want to hear new voices,” Groff said. “Everyone at this college, right now, I hope that they’re writing and collaborating and making things to inspire us.”

CAMPUS NEWS

TCU, former professor each file motions in discrimination lawsuit

By **BENTON MCDONALD**
EXECUTIVE EDITOR, TCU360

Lawyers for TCU have asked a federal court to reject a discrimination claim filed by a former economics professor, arguing in part that she voluntarily resigned.

But attorneys for Dr. Silda Nikaj, who has alleged that she faced racial and gender discrimination while in the economics department, are arguing that Nikaj never intended to resign, and instead was seeking a leave of absence.

Both sides filed motions in a Dallas federal court last week seeking a judgment.

A spokesperson for TCU released a brief statement to TCU360:

“As a practice, TCU does not comment on pending litigation beyond the papers we file in court. TCU is focused on creating a respectful and inclusive community for all students.”

Along with the claim of unlawful termination, TCU is also asking the court to consider rejecting Nikaj’s claims of:

A violation of Section 1981, which covers discrimination charges based on race

Unlawful pay by TCU

A host of other miscellaneous claims related to teaching assignments, incomplete investigations by TCU, an increase in research assignments and a failure to take an alleged hate crime seriously enough that were filed under Title VII.



PHOTO BY CRISTIAN ARGUETASOTO

Former Provost Dr. Nowell Donovan denied Nikaj’s request for leave and accepted her resignation.

Nikaj is seeking a ruling on counter-claims filed by TCU last February that she breached her contract because she failed to inform the university that she had accepted a full-time position at the National Institute of Health (NIH) while she was still a TCU employee.

Lawyers for the university argued that Nikaj’s claims under Section 1981 should be barred by the two-year statute of limitations. The events that Nikaj is citing occurred between 2012-2017, meaning they fall outside of the limit.

TCU counsel also said that some of Nikaj’s claims fail as a matter of law.

For both the unlawful termination and unlawful pay claims,

TCU presented a host of reasons that assert “legitimate business reasons” for how they acted that aren’t discriminatory. These included:

Denying her leave of absence request and subsequently accepting her resignation because she violated university policy

Treating her failure to follow policy as a non-discriminatory reason to consider her actions a resignation

Paying a male colleague of Nikaj a greater starting salary because he had competing offers and negotiated with the university

Paying the same male colleague a higher salary after hire because he was rated higher under the economics departments

pay-adjustment procedure and received two merit raises

The lawyers cited the statute of limitations for most of Nikaj’s miscellaneous claims, which were made under Title VII. The federal law preventing employment discrimination has a 300-day limitation.

Nikaj filed her discrimination claim with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) on June 27, 2017, so TCU’s lawyers argue anything before Sept. 2, 2016, is outside of the statute of limitations.

This includes seven of the discrimination claims made by Nikaj, mainly related to actions surrounding her position like disparate treatment and a tenure requirement that allegedly benefited a male colleague at her expense.

TCU’s lawyers argued the rest of the claims weren’t “ultimate employment decisions” required for Title VII discrimination cases and shouldn’t be acted on by the court. These included changes to evaluation criteria and expectations on her attendance at faculty meetings.

All of these claims came secondary to the central focus of both motions: The timeline and circumstances surrounding Nikaj’s departure from TCU to the NIH in late 2016.

At issue is whether Nikaj resigned from the university or was terminated, and if it had to do with her complaints of discrimination.

A request for leave

On Dec. 23, 2016, Nikaj emailed a letter to then-Dean of the AddRan College of Liberal Arts Dr. Andrew Schoolmaster and then-Provost Nowell Donovan informing them that she would be going “on leave from TCU without pay and no longer permitted to operate in an official capacity for TCU.”

The letter came two weeks after the NIH confirmed to Nikaj that she had accepted a full-time appointment with a one-year trial period, and just three days before she began working for them.

Lawyers for TCU claimed in their motion for judgment that the timeline of Nikaj’s

actions violated the university policy for requesting leave.

According to the policy, applications are due to the Provost no later than Nov. 15 of the academic year before leave.

During a deposition for the suit, Nikaj was asked why she notified TCU of her intent to go on leave only days in advance of leaving.

“It was the end of the semester, so, you know, I needed time to finish up the semester, and I needed time to think about what I needed to do,” she said. “And I’m sorry. Just, you know, I must have been really busy at that time.”

TCU claimed that Nikaj’s letter, which was sent while the university was closed for the holiday, “created havoc on TCU’s employees.”

Nikaj was under contract to teach two classes in the upcoming spring semester and expected to advise 30 students.

One class, labor economics, was dropped by the university and the enrolled students were placed in an urban economics class.

On Jan. 3, 2017, Nikaj formally submitted her application for an 18-month unpaid leave from the university while she worked at the NIH.

Dr. Zack Hawley, an economics professor at TCU, testified that he had never heard of a tenure track assistant professor like Nikaj requesting an unpaid leave of absence.

Two days after she
CONTINUED ON PAGE 5

“Title VII’s anti-retaliation provision does not shield an employee from those petty slights and minor annoyances that all employees experience”

-LAWYERS FOR TCU
IN A FILED MOTION

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

submitted the request, Donovan denied it and said that Nikaj had “constructively resigned,” because of her actions.

“In direct contraven-tion of your employment agreement, you have accepted and commenced working in a full-time position at the [NIH] in Maryland,” the provost wrote in his letter to Nikaj. “It is disappointing that you never notified your department of your application for this external position and that you did not initiate your leave request or notify TCU of your employment decision until the very last minute.”

Donovan concluded the letter by accepting Nikaj’s resignation and she received her last paycheck at the end of the month.



PHOTO COURTESY OF TCU
Dr. Rob Garnett was the chair of the economics department at the time of Nikaj’s departure.

Internal discussions

Both motions covered the emails and discussions had by TCU officials in the two-week period between Nikaj’s initial letter and the provost’s acceptance of her resignation.

Dr. Robert Garnett, then-chair of the economics department, said he believed Nikaj’s request for leave should be denied because she

did not follow the policy.

Other colleagues agreed and some said that she should be fired because of her actions.

Vice-Chancellor and Chief Human Resources Officer Yohna Chambers was also involved in the discussions and said in one email that TCU’s “employ-ment-related dilemma is whether or not we choose to continue her employment with TCU.”

Also factoring into the discussion was Nikaj’s complaint letter to the TCU Title IX office that was sent the month before she went on leave.

Nikaj asked the university to look into her “disparate treatment and retaliations for my claims of disparate treatment.”

Garnett learned about the complaint in the days after Nikaj revealed she was going on leave and emailed Dr. Darron Turner, former chief inclusion officer, to check its status.

University lawyers argued in their motion that this timeline of events proves that Garnett was not retaliating against Nikaj when he recommended that her leave request be denied.

An HR employee was in the midst of inves-tigating the complaint when Nikaj left the university, according to TCU’s motion. Nikaj has claimed retaliation because the university did not complete the investigation.

The employee had planned to conduct interviews after the winter holiday. When Schoolmaster asked Garnett to check Nikaj’s office in early January, it



PHOTO COURTESY OF TCU
Dr. Rob Garnett was the chair of the economics department at the time of Nikaj’s departure.

was cleaned out.

Chambers viewed the Title IX complaint and Nikaj’s leave request as separate matters, according to an email in Nikaj’s brief.

After receiving Nikaj’s application for formal leave and additional documents related to her negotia-tions and employment with the NIH on Jan. 3, Chambers recommended to the provost that TCU should deny the request and accept Nikaj’s resignation.

Chambers wrote in one email to Garrett and Schoolmaster that university attorneys seemed on board with accepting Nikaj’s resignation.

“I had a preliminary conversation and they seem willing to support our ‘accepting her resignation,’” she wrote.

Nikaj’s lawyers argued in their brief that TCU violated their own policy by not reaching out to Nikaj for alternatives to termination.

“While this retaliation took several different forms, the end result was that TCU terminated her employment and instead of following its own policy, TCU tried to say that she resigned.”

-LAWYERS FOR DR. SILDA NIKAJ
IN A FILED MOTION

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS
FORT WORTH DIVISION

SILDA NIKAJ,
Plaintiff-Counterclaim Defendant
v.
TEXAS CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY,
Defendant-Counterclaim Plaintiff

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CIVIL ACTION NO. 4:20-cv-00443-P

PLAINTIFF/COUNTERCLAIM DEFENDANT’S PARTIAL MOTION FOR SUMMARY JUDGMENT

Plaintiff/Counterclaim Defendant Dr. Silda Nikaj (“Nikaj”) respectfully moves the Court to grant summary judgment in her favor on all of Texas Christian University’s (“TCU”) breach of contract claims under Rule of Civil Procedure 56, requesting that the Court dismiss TCU’s claims against her with prejudice, tax costs against TCU, and grant her all other relief to which she is entitled. Plaintiff/Counterclaim Defendant’s brief in support is filed concurrently with this motion pursuant to the local rules. See N.D. TEX. L. CIV. R. 7.1(d) and 56. Each of the required matters set forth in Local Rule 56(a) are set forth in her brief.

PHOTO COURTESY OF TCU360
First page of Dr. Silda Nikaj’s motion. TCU’s motion and the briefs in support of motion for both sides can be read on TCU360.com

SPORTS

After disappointing 2019 season, rookie Horned Frogs find roles in the NFL

By **BRADEN ROUX**
STAFF WRITER, TCU360

A number of recent TCU football alumni made their mark as rookies in the NFL this past season.

Following a disappointing 5-7 season in 2019, the Horned Frogs drew national attention in the 2020 NFL draft with its largest draft class since 2016.

The Frogs led the Big 12 with five players picked (sixth nationally) and tied with Oklahoma for the most first round picks with two, marking the first time TCU has had two first round draft picks since 1939.

Following the draft, five more players were signed as undrafted free agents.

The lack of training camp and preseason games because of COVID-19 made the former Frogs' transition to the NFL unique. As the season progressed, several of them were still able to make a real impact. Let's take a look

at how their seasons went.

Jalen Reagor – Wide Receiver (Round: 1 Pick: 21 – Philadelphia Eagles)

Jalen Reagor stepped into a depleted Eagles' receiving core and was able to earn playing time right off the bat. Soon after, he missed five games after being placed on injured reserve due to a torn ligament in his thumb.

In his first season as a pro, the former TCU wideout played in 11 total games and made 31 catches for 396 yards and a touchdown. Reagor also showed the NFL he can be a special teams threat with a 73-yard punt return for a touchdown against the Packers.

In his three seasons as a Horned Frog, Reagor had 3,296 all-purpose yards and 24 touchdowns, two of which were punt returns. The Waxahachie native was also the earliest Frog drafted since TCU legend

LaDainian Tomlinson, who was drafted fifth overall in 2001.

Jeff Gladney – Cornerback (Round: 1 Pick: 31 – Minnesota Vikings)

Gladney anchored TCU's secondary during his years in college, and even his earliest moments in Minnesota gave him the opportunity to do the same on the pro level.

Injuries in the Vikings' secondary gave Gladney an opportunity to see the field more than originally expected, and he did not disappoint. He played in all 16 games this season, recording 81 tackles, 3 passes defended and a forced fumble.

His playing time came mostly as a slot corner and he exceeded expectations at one of the hardest positions to play as a rookie.

In college, Gladney totaled 146 tackles, 38 passes defended and five interceptions in four seasons as one of Pro Football Focus's top-rated cornerbacks. His selection following Reagor's marked the first time the Horned Frogs had multiple first round draft picks since 1939.

Ross Blacklock – Defensive tackle (Round: 2 Pick: 40 – Houston Texans)

In his rookie campaign, Blacklock served as a rotational defensive lineman for the Texans. He played in 15 games and recorded 14



PHOTO COURTESY OF AP

Philadelphia Eagles wide receiver Jalen Reagor (18) eludes the grasp of Arizona Cardinals linebacker Dennis Gardeck during the second half of an NFL football game, Sunday, Dec. 20, 2020, in Glendale, Ariz

total tackles. With the recent release of long time Texan J.J. Watt, Blacklock looks to play a much bigger role on a Houston defense that ranked 30th in the league last year.

As a Frog, Blacklock recorded 67 tackles and 5.5 sacks in two seasons, anchoring TCU's defensive line and earning him First Team Big 12 honors in 2019.

Lucas Niang – Offensive Tackle (Round: 3 Pick: 96 – Kansas City Chiefs)

Drafted in the third round by the defending Super Bowl champions, Niang decided to opt out of his rookie season due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The New Canaan, Connecticut, native is capable of playing both guard and tackle, which will give him a better chance to see the field next season.

While in college, he did not allow a sack in the 19 games he started during his junior and senior years.

Vernon Scott – Safety (Round: 7 Pick: 236 – Green Bay Packers)

An unexpected late round pick, Scott impressed the Packers in training camp and ended up playing in 13 games as a backup in the Green Bay secondary. This season, the former Frog had 13 tackles and a sack.

Scott was the only rookie Frog that made the playoffs, even seeing some playing time in the National Football Conference divisional round against the Los Angeles Rams. As a Frog, Scott was a big-play threat on the three turnovers he forced, one of which was a 98-yard interception return for a touchdown.

Undrafted Free Agents

Of the five TCU players signed as undrafted free agents, none recorded any stats in the 2020 season.

Running backs Sewo Olonilua and Darius Anderson were both signed by the Dallas Cowboys, and while Olonilua is now on their active roster, Anderson currently has a reserves/futures contract with the Indianapolis Colts.

Offensive guard Cordel Iwuagwu was signed by the Houston Texans, and he is now on the Cleveland Browns' reserves/futures list. Offensive tackle Anthony McKinney was picked up by the Tennessee Titans, but he opted out of the season before training camp because of COVID-19. Wide receiver TreVontae Hights was signed by the Carolina Panthers and released shortly after.

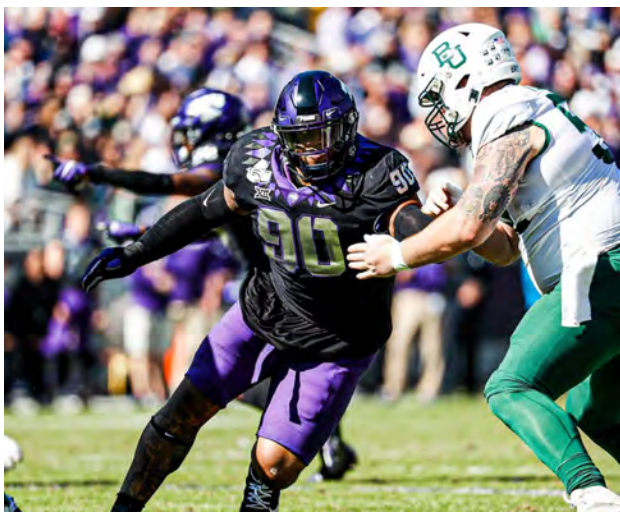


PHOTO HEESOO YANG

Ross Blacklock makes a move to get to the quarterback in TCU's 30T loss to No. 7 Baylor in 2019.

CAMPUS NEWS

‘Diagnosed, Not Defined’ campaign by student government fights stigma

By MAIZEY EDGAR
STAFF WRITER, TCU360

A campaign to help TCU community members not feel defined by their health diagnoses hosted an outreach tabling day on Feb. 26.

Diagnosed, Not Defined (DND) is a Student Government Association (SGA) initiative that started last year.

Class of 2023 Representative Anastasia Helms started the campaign to help make students feel worth beyond their medical chart.

“Our goal is to make everyone feel seen, heard, loved and worthy and not defined by what their medical chart says about them,” she said.

DND focuses on strengthening unity on campus in relation to health diagnoses, and ensuring that community

members have access to the resources they need.

SGA Director of Wellness Kendall Drummond said that the initiative helps expand the “safety net” on campus to make sure that needs are getting met in relation to wellness.

DND expands this net through interactions and connections that Drummond thinks can help alleviate the trauma that medical diagnoses can bring.

“Strengthening and transparency between the students doesn’t create a culture of division, but a culture of unity,” she said. “We want to create a safe place for everybody. The best way to alleviate these symptoms of trauma (with diagnoses) is connections with other human beings.”

The initiative also connects students with the campus resources they need, whether they

are struggling with their mental health or looking for a new workout plan that works for their health conditions.

“This campaign, along with leadership from the counseling center and Chancellor Boschini, is trying to show that trauma is not a scary word. That trauma happens to all of us, especially after COVID, and that trauma can be dealt with with the resources on campus,” Drummond said.

Separating identity from diagnosis

Helms discussed her own struggles after being diagnosed with epilepsy her senior year of high school.

She stressed the importance of a strong support system, and said that her diagnosis inspired her to apply for SGA to create the DND



PHOTO BY ETHAN MITO

Diagnosed Not Defined Campaign at a tabling event in 2020.

campaign and help TCU students address the fear and isolation that may follow a diagnosis.

“While we may not physically or emotionally understand exactly what a student is going through, being able to have someone who can be there for them and give them that support will make all the difference,” Helms said.

Helms wants the DND campaign to help students separate their identity from their

diagnosis.

“Our diagnoses don’t define us,” she said. “My name is Anastasia, not epilepsy. I want other people to feel the same way. This is a part of me, but it is not who I am as a person.”

During the campaign, students will be able to connect with others with the same diagnosis and learn from students that don’t share their diagnoses.

DND extends to all forms of diagnoses,

not just psychological, though mental health is at the center of the campaign.

“I’m not ‘mental health director’, I’m wellness director. It goes beyond just mental health,” Drummond said. “It goes to epilepsy, broken bones, deafness, blindness, enlarged tonsils and allergies, heart palpitations. We have resources on this campus that can address all aspects of wellness.”



PHOTO BY ETHAN MITO

Helms (right) poses with a DND sign last February.



PHOTO BY ETHAN MITO

A look at resources from the DND campaign.

COMMUNITY

LaDainian Tomlinson asks TCU to lead charge for racial understanding

By COLIN POST

LINE EDITOR, TCU360

When the name Tomlinson was first given to George, who was enslaved in the mid-19th century on a Central Texas plantation just over 100 miles from TCU, it was a symbol of his belonging to a white man.

Almost 200 years later, the name means something different.

George's great great grandson is LaDainian Tomlinson, one of the greatest running backs in NFL history, who is using his name and platform to address the effects of racism felt by people of color in America today.

"Obviously, I made it to the Hall of Fame, but

I always felt like it wasn't about me making it to the Hall of Fame," said Tomlinson. Instead, he said it was about helping to move the country forward.

Using his platform for social change

Last summer, that mission developed a new urgency as the U.S. was swept into a racial crisis following the death of George Floyd while being restrained by a Minnesota police officer. Millions of people, including thousands of athletes and celebrities, renewed calls for social justice.

For Tomlinson, the racial conversation of the last nine months echoes what's been on his mind for years.

Tomlinson was 19 when James Byrd Jr. was brutally murdered by three white supremacists in Jasper, Texas. He remembers TCU teammate Victor Payne, a Jasper native, having to leave campus for a time following the incident.

"That was eye-opening. It was like 'My God,'" Tomlinson said. "Here we are in '98 or '99, and this is really happening. That was the first sign of, man, I need to do more."

Since then, Tomlinson has been looking for ways to use his platform to make people aware of and prevent things like the murder of Byrd.

Tomlinson, TCU's all-time leading rusher and a member of the TCU Board of Trustees, jumped at the



PHOTO COURTESY OF AP

LaDainian Tomlinson speaks next to a bust of him at the Pro Football Hall of Fame inductions.

opportunity to join the university's Race and Reconciliation Initiative, which is examining TCU's relationship with racism, enslavement and the Confederacy.

Formed in July, the RRI was created to undertake the task of confronting TCU's ties to racist ideals that date back to its founders, Addison and Randolph Clark, who both served in the Confederacy.

"I look forward to adding my voice to our collective voice," Tomlinson said. "Amplifying the values and lessons learned from this initiative."

On Thursday evening, the Horned Frog legend was the keynote speaker at an event hosted by the RRI, speaking for just over 20 minutes on the reality of racial injustice in America and what TCU can do as a school to fight it.

Titled "Acknowledging

our past, defining our future," Tomlinson's speech was focused on healing. He highlighted why the RRI was important for TCU as a university in their journey toward becoming a place where people feel welcome regardless of their skin color.

Team TCU

Throughout the address, Tomlinson referenced moments from the speech he gave in August of 2017 at his induction to the Pro Football Hall of Fame. The former running back had spent the latter portion of his induction speech encouraging the audience to join "Team America" and fight disunity based on color.

The speech went viral, and a portion of it was used in a recent NFL commercial that was aired during the super bowl to highlight

the league's efforts to promote change.

"Football is a microcosm of America, all races, religions, and creeds living, playing, competing side-by-side," Tomlinson said during his induction. "When you're a part of a team, you understand your teammates—their strengths and weaknesses."

This analogy was one Tomlinson connected to TCU as well, saying that people of all different backgrounds are at the university "living, playing, [and] learning side-by-side."

"When you're a apart of Team TCU, you understand your classmates—their values, their strengths and weaknesses," Tomlinson said. "The university's vision and values work toward the same goal: to become the finest person and valued member of

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PHOTO COURTESY OF AP

LaDainian Tomlinson delivers his speech during inductions at the Pro Football Hall of Fame.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8
society possible.”

Confronting the past and finding unity in the present through understanding and love is not a new challenge to Tomlinson, but rather one he has already had to overcome in his own life.

His background

As a child, Tomlinson grew up on the very land on which George Tomlinson was enslaved by those with his same last name but a different color of skin. Now, that area is called “Tomlinson Hill,” as LaDanian and his Black family have worked to reconcile with the Tomlinson’s whose ancestors who were on the other side of the whip.

The TCU legend shared that, at the prompting of his mother, this reconciliation had come for him at the age of 22, when he went to visit Chris Tomlinson,

the great great grandson of George Tomlinson’s slave owner.

Their conversation had been one of humbly acknowledging the scars that existed and confidently moving forward as family, and it is that same approach that Tomlinson called for TCU to take going forward.

“I firmly believe that God chose me to bring two races together under one name—Tomlinson,” Tomlinson said. “My story is TCU’s story.”

Tomlinson referred to parts of TCU’s past as an “ignominy,” saying that putting them under the light for everyone to see is the only way to “assure a more equitable, inclusive future for all at Texas Christian University.”

Through all of this, Tomlinson made to take several moments to emphasize his love for TCU, despite its shortcomings, and its

significant impact in his life.

“I am a proud graduate of Texas Christian University,” Tomlinson said. “This university helped mold me into the man I became and the man I continue to strive to be.”

What’s next?

Despite the forming of the RRI and similar programs at other schools around the nation, as well as the increase in awareness surrounding the topic of racism in America, Tomlinson said that both TCU and the country as a whole still have a long way to go.

“It will never be done. There is nothing that I can say or anyone can say that will stop it all,” Tomlinson said. “It just will never happen, but what happens is we keep bringing awareness to a certain situation. We keep on speaking about



PHOTO COURTESY OF AP

San Diego Chargers LaDainian Tomlinson (21) runs in the open field against the Green Bay Packers.

peace and love for our neighbors.”

In fact, the experience of racism is not one that Tomlinson, even as a celebrity and millionaire, is immune from.

The Westlake, Texas, native shared that just a few months ago he was on a hunting trip with three friends, one of

whom was also Black, while the others were white. The group met at a gas station before the trip, with Tomlinson alone is his black Lincoln SUV.

Though the two cars were together and had just begun to drive, Tomlinson alone was pulled over shortly after for no apparent reason.

“There are people that still only see a Black man first. They don’t see that it’s LaDanian Tomlinson,” Tomlinson said in an interview on Tuesday. “I get pulled over, maybe racial profiling, and then, originally, it’s like, ‘Oh no, this is LaDanian.’ Okay, what was the point in pulling me over in the first place?”

Tomlinson said that he and many other Black people like him face fears like this everyday not only for themselves but also for their children and generations to come.

“What if my kids don’t become well known?” Tomlinson said. “What if they are just great citizens and that happened to them one day? You can easily

put yourself in that position because it has happened.”

On the other hand, Tomlinson did say that he believes change is coming, though that the concrete nature of the change will only come from the dedicated efforts of corporations, organizations, and everyday from all races.

For college students personally, especially those who are white, Tomlinson said that the key is talking to and learning from those who have actually experienced the ways racism effects Black people everyday.

“In today’s age, if you don’t have a friend that doesn’t look like you, shame on you,” Tomlinson said.

In the coming months, the RRI, with Tomlinson by their side, will continue working towards uncovering the truth about TCU’s past and what that means for its present and future.

This work all leads up to “Reconciliation Day” (April 21), as the RRI reports on their discoveries and the university takes its first



PHOTO COURTESY OF AP

In this 2006 file, Tomlinson, congratulates TCU players’ Steve Coleman and Bart Johnson as they celebrate victory.



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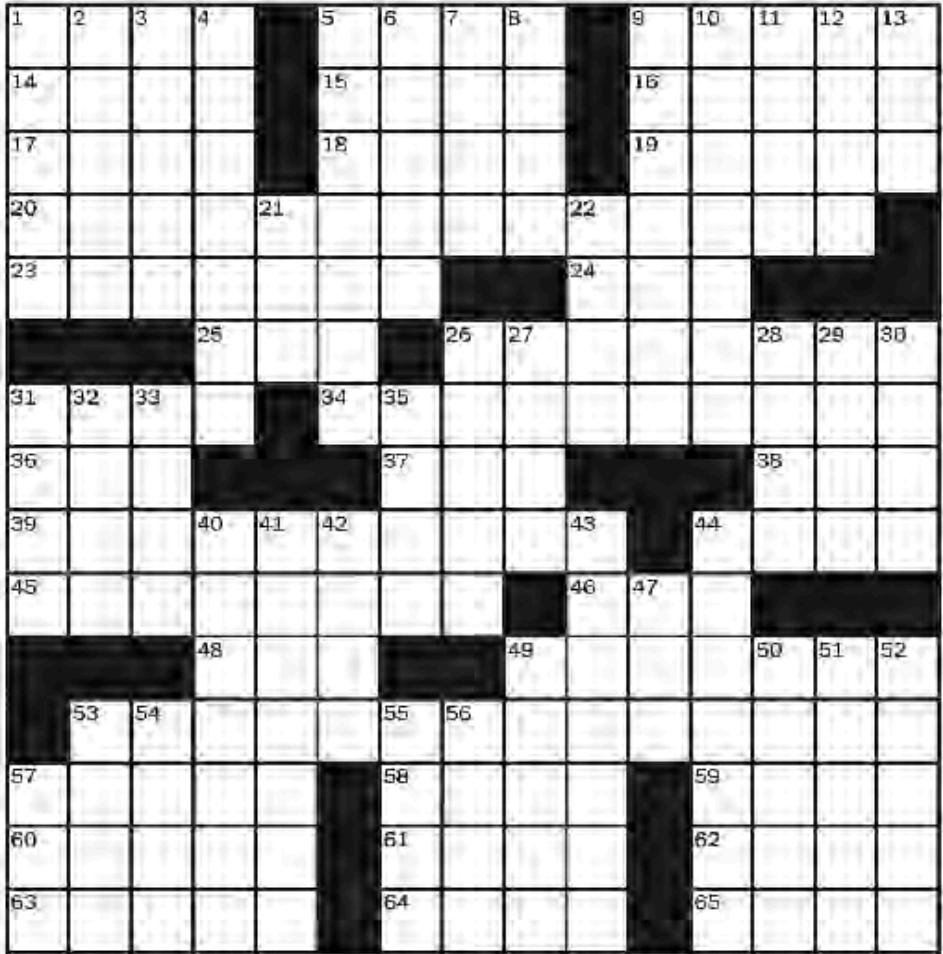
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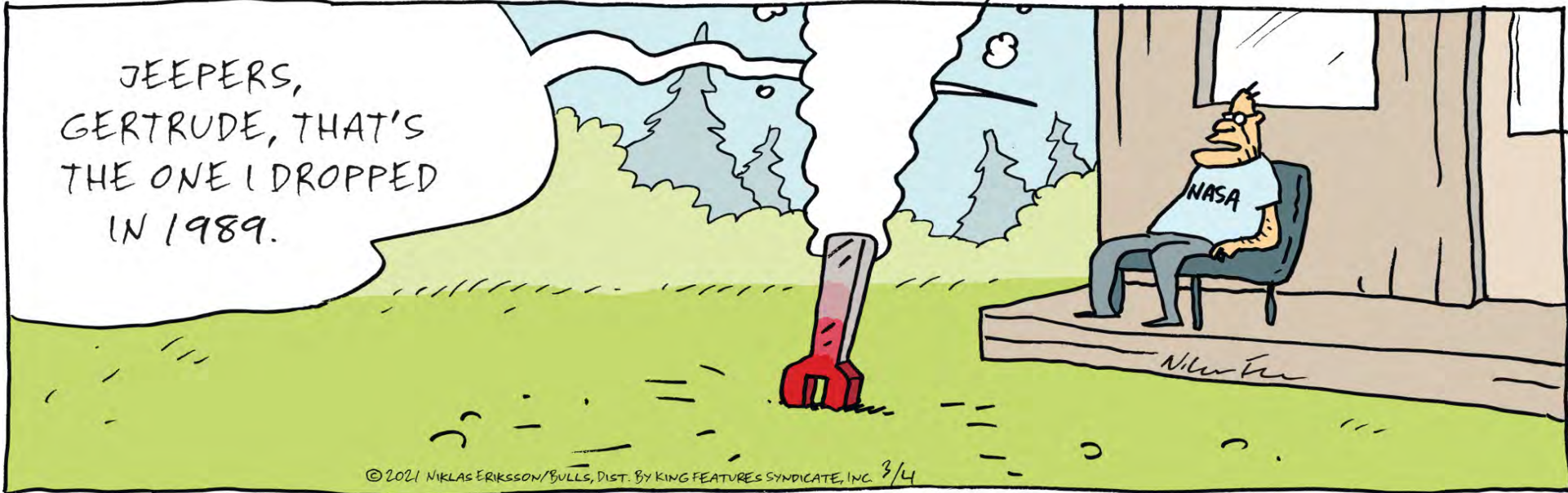
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The New York Times Edited by Will Shortz

- ACROSS
- 1 Singer Del Rey
- 5 Giant walking combat vehicle in "Star Wars" films
- 9 Stuffs
- 14 Not just occasionally
- 15 Blue shade
- 16 Without backup
- 17 Poppycock
- 18 Release, as a song, in modern lingo
- 19 "OK, you win"
- 20 Something directly following a penultimate position — that is to say, diametrically opposed to a primary one
- 23 Gracefully send away
- 24 Passing comment?
- 25 Girl group with the 1999 #1 album "FanMail"
- 26 90s, say
- 31 Lie in the sun
- 34 Like an oven
- 36 Demographic figure
- 37 "Bullet" in a food fight
- 38 Female kangaroo
- 39 Golden blades that may be tenderly chew'd by equine or bovine beings
- 44 None of it is good, as the saying goes
- 45 One committing insurance fraud, maybe
- 46 Prospector's find
- 48 ___ Halles (central food market in Paris, once)
- 49 It may end with a reality check
- 53 The cat's meow, baby. Dig?
- 57 Follower of pigs or cows
- 58 Be plentiful
- 59 In perpetuity
- 60 Country sound
- 61 Black-and-white swimmer
- 62 Name meaning "born again"
- 63 Shipment
- 64 Actor Damon
- 65 Till section
- DOWN
- 1 Drink from a machine
- 2 Colorful kind of shirt
- 3 Common congestion points
- 4 Figure skater, for one
- 5 With more of the same sort
- 6 Donna ___, 2014 Pulitzer winner for "The Goldfinch"
- 7 Confess openly
- 8 Mistakke, of a sort?
- 9 Agreed to tie the knot
- 10 North African capital
- 11 Work
- 12 "That most odious and antisocial of all passions": John Stuart Mill
- 13 Date
- 21 Pioneering I.S.P.
- 22 Four-star
- 26 Wiped out
- 27 Human rights lawyer Clooney
- 28 Number two
- 29 What crystal jellies do when disturbed
- 30 Views
- 31 ___ Men (one-hit wonder group of 2000)
- 32 Food thickener
- 33 Janitor's janglers
- 35 Decides
- 40 Not doing a darn thing
- 41 Cry toward the end of a list
- 42 Source of some omega-3s
- 43 It may be rolled out for exercise
- 44 Competitor of 21-Down
- 47 Cartoonist Chast
- 49 Tape recorder button
- 50 Torn asunder
- 51 TV producer Chaika
- 52 Funerary burners
- 53 Classic name in audio equipment
- 54 Shakespeare character who says "How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is / To have a thankless child!"
- 55 Model in a science classroom
- 56 Computing prefix
- 57 Alternative to an ellipsis



Carpe Diem by Niklas Eriksson





Dustin by Steve Kelley and Jeff Parker



Horoscope

The Stars Show the Kind of Day You'll Have: 5-Dynamic; 4-Positive; 3-Average; 2-So-so; 1-Difficult

ARIES (March 21-April 19) ★★★★★ An old demon no longer troubles you. Inwardly, you'll feel peaceful and strong. New financial strategies are worth considering. Your analytical ability is in top form, enabling you to find solutions to several pesky problems. Tonight: A sigh of relief.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) ★★★ Be lighthearted about partnerships today. Today doesn't favor a serious or committed situation. Use caution in making promises, and select associates with care. Trust your instincts if a project of time-investment seems risky. Tonight: Vulnerable to peer pressure.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20) ★★★ Today accents domestic relationships. Be alert to the

needs of beloved pets; they'll be especially sensitive and emotional -- also with any assistantship you hire and use. Companions surprise you with progressive plans. Tonight: A marvelous cycle for decision-making.

CANCER (June 21-July 22) ★★★★★ Your charisma is at a peak, and interesting new prospects are attracted to you. Genuine drama is followed by the fireworks clearing. A companion whom you've lost track of can resurface. Tonight: Double-check all agreements, for questions of propriety come into play.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) ★★★★★ Work hard and be patient. Quiet contemplation helps you find contentment. It's a perfect cycle for redecorating projects in your home. You'll be devoting great energy to family matters. Honor your childhood memories and heritage. Tonight:

A long and soothing herbal bath.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) ★★★★★ You're ready to explore and wander. Reflect upon a world map to help intuit the best places for visits once this pandemic is over. There is an urge to be active, not to wait. Today reminds you to savor the present. Tonight: Savoring.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) ★★★★★ Today marks a wonderful time to separate the promising from the outmoded with regard to your source of income. You're very progressive in analyzing new economic trends. You get good financial news. Tonight: Investment clubs and other group activities help you with financial planning.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) ★★★★★ Today your charm and beauty impress the right people and help is offered. Pursue social and professional

opportunities. Mental energy and artistic aptitude are heightened. New ideas abound. A friend is helpful and has knowledge to share. Tonight: Dance like no one's watching.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) ★★★★★ Take time for quiet reflection today. Explore your subconscious needs through meditation and dream analysis. A person from the past unexpectedly gets in touch. You will be glad. Helping others who are less fortunate brings you joy. Tonight: A good night's sleep.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) ★★★★★ Today emphasizes help, charity and wellness. A reunion of some type can be planned. Goals crystallize. Healing and growth are due. A larger-than-life quality prevails, but stay grounded and keep your perspective. Seek efficiency. Tonight: Involvement on Zoom with a large group.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) ★★★★★ Be a good listener. You may learn a lot. Today creates a limiting and somewhat frustrating career situation. Accept others as they are and use your creative ideas constructively. By the end of the day, recognition is yours. Tonight: Celebrate with older family members.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20) ★★★★★ Today brings a cycle of great insight and awareness. Discussion groups and an eclectic combination of cultural traditions awaken your higher mind. Studying another language can have a positive impact too. Tonight: Watch a foreign movie or documentary.

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SPORTS

‘We’ve got to be better’: Dixon disappointed with 20-point loss

By COLIN POST

LINE EDITOR, TCU 360

You knew things were bad for TCU Basketball on Tuesday night when the deepest point of Texas Tech’s bench was on the floor and getting standing ovations from the crowd.

With five minutes to go in the game, center Vladislav Goldin checked in for the Red Raiders, spurring a deafening roar from the packed-out student section at United Supermarkets Arena. Moments later, the seven-footer, who averages just 4.7 minutes per game, hit a layup, sending the arena into a pandemonium.

The moment was the final nail in the coffin for TCU in yet another embarrassing defeat for the Frogs, who have now lost four of their last five games.

Behind just 39% shooting as a team and 15 turnovers committed, TCU fell to No. 17 Texas Tech 69-49 on Tuesday in a game they needed to win to catch the Red Raiders in the Big 12 standings and give themselves a chance at a postseason berth.

Entering the matchup, Texas Tech ranked just one spot ahead of TCU in the conference, giving the Frogs a prime opportunity to get a ranked win on the road and keep themselves in the NIT conversation.

“I’ve got to get them more motivation, I guess, because that should’ve been enough,” head coach Jamie Dixon said.

“They were a game ahead of us in the loss column.”

Known for its defense that carried them to a national championship in 2019, Texas Tech

suffocated TCU’s offense all night long. Guard R.J. Nembhard was the lone Frog to finish in double figures (10 points), as they shot a miserable 24% from behind-the arc.

True freshman Mike Miles finished with just two points in the contest, shooting 1-for-8 from the floor. Midway through the second half, the guard tweaked his ankle, preventing him from playing much for the rest of the night.

Despite the fact that the Frogs were harassed by the loudest in-person crowd they’ve seen all season, Dixon said the noise was far from TCU’s biggest problem in the game.

“It shouldn’t have [had an impact],” Dixon said of the crowd. “They’re college basketball players. We’ve played in front of a lot more people than that.”

By halftime, the Frogs had been out-rebounded, out-shot, and out-hustled, putting them down 36-22 and giving them a long trudge to the locker room.

Samuel would once-again, provide a spark in the second half, scoring five early point to help cut the Red Raider lead down to a reachable 13.

Texas Tech would then hit TCU on the mouth again, though, holding the Frogs without a field goal for over seven minutes and opening up a 54-31 lead that fully closed the door on any chance of a TCU victory.

TCU was out-rebounded 33-28 and out-assisted 22-7 in the game, as they failed to perform in the two areas Dixon has continued to emphasize the most in the last month.

In the postgame



PHOTO COURTESY OF AP

Texas Tech's Marcus Santos-Silva (14) shoots during the first half of the team's NCAA college basketball game against TCU in Lubbock, Texas, on March 2, 2021.

press conference, Dixon continued to repeat a five-word phrase: “We’ve got to be better.”

If TCU is going to get any better this season, it’s going to have to

happen fast, as they now head up to Morgantown for a matchup with No. 6 West Virginia in two days. Tip-off with the Mountaineers is scheduled for 6 p.m.

SPORTS

Women’s Basketball falls to Kansas State in overtime loss

By SAM FRISTACHI

LINE EDITOR, TCU360

The last time the TCU Horned Frogs (8-13, 3-13 Big 12) took on the Kansas State Wildcats (8-15, 3-13 Big 12), they were coming off a 3-game losing streak and came out with a win.

However, last night that was not the case. After riding a three-game losing streak, the Horned Frogs fell in a heartbreaking overtime loss, 79-76.

The first half would feature an exchange of

runs by both teams as Kansas State took an early 7-0 lead, but TCU fought back, going on a 6-0 run led by senior guard Lauren Heard.

The Wildcats went into halftime with a 37-27 lead as the Horned Frogs shot 4-19 from outside the arc and Heard missed the final two minutes of the first half.

“We had a slower start than we needed to and that has happened in a couple of games now, but I’m proud of the fight, effort and the grit. They didn’t give

up. Heartbreaking that we weren’t able to come out with the win on the road,” head coach Raegan Pebley said. “I know this is a team that’s fearlessly trying to fight and stay locked into each other.”

TCU came out of halftime strong as the team erased a 16-point deficit. Guards Aahliyah Jackson and Tavy Diggs hit clutch threes in the third quarter to help the Horned Frogs outscore Kansas State 23-18 and cut the lead to just five points, 55-50.

“In the second half they just did a second half staying locked in with each other and there was better synergy on the floor,” Pebley said.

“Lauren was incredibly valiant in her effort today offensively and defensively and on the board,” Pebley said. “She’s just giving everything she has to her team and you know it’s special to see her perform.”

TCU will remain on the road as the Frogs take on the Oklahoma Sooners this Thursday,



PHOTO COURTESY OF GOFROGS.COM

TCU guard Lauren Heard led the team with 35 points and 6 rebounds in the loss against Kansas State.

March 4. Tip-off is set for 5 p.m. and the game

will be televised on Big 12 Now on ESPN+.