

SPORTS

BRINGING CHAMPION BLUEPRINT

United South assistant girls basketball coach reflects on previous state wins.

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LOCAL

HAVE A QUESTION? ASK ELLE

Laredo launches virtual assistant chatbot on city website.

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NATION

12 DIE IN PLANE CRASH

A pilot and 11 others were killed when a plane taking people skydiving crashed.

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County OKs \$3.6M payroll boost

Move will impact nearly 1,000 positions and comes after pay review

By David Gomez Jr.
STAFF WRITER

Webb County recently approved implementation of a countywide compensation and classification study affecting nearly 1,000 positions after findings showed employee pay lagged behind comparable governments by more than 22% at entry-level salary ranges.

County leaders voted to implement 97.5% of the recommen-

dations contained in a wage and classification study conducted by Management Advisory Group International, or MAG. The study reviewed approximately 1,007 positions across 323 job titles and compared Webb County salaries with those of 14 peer entities, including counties, municipalities and Laredo ISD.

According to the study, county positions surveyed were paid an average of 22.4% below market at the minimums of salary

ranges and 5.9% below market at midpoint pay levels. Certain positions — including court clerks, administrative secretaries, heavy equipment operators and various public safety positions — were identified as lagging further behind market rates and were adjusted in the recommended compensation plan.

Webb County Judge Tano Tijerina said the study had been underway for nearly two years and was intended to help the

county remain competitive in attracting and retaining employees.

“We’re just trying to be competitive,” he said.

Tijerina supported the study but said he would have preferred to wait until the upcoming budget process before implementation, citing several personnel policy issues that still needed refinement, including procedures related to promotions, reclassifications and temporary assignments.

The approved 97.5% imple-

mentation level is projected to increase county payroll by approximately \$3.6 million annually, representing a 6.98% increase over current payroll costs. The study estimated that 995 positions would receive adjustments under the adopted plan, while seven positions would remain unchanged.

Pct. 4 Commissioner Ricardo Jaime said the process began in late 2024 when commissioners initiated efforts to hire an outside consultant to review em-

Payroll continues on A5



Photos by Zach Davis/Laredo Morning Times

District VIII Council Member Alyssa Cigarroa and Dr. Ricardo Cigarroa stand with Imaginarium of South Texas board members as the two were honored at the Imaginarium’s 2026 Imagine Awards Gala on Thursday.

Trump warns Israel and Iran not to ‘blow it’

By Julia Frankel, Abby Sewell, Samy Magdy and Will Weissert
ASSOCIATED PRESS

JERUSALEM — President Donald Trump on Sunday urged no further attacks by anyone after Israel’s military said it launched strikes on Hezbollah targets in Beirut, potentially complicating efforts to finalize a deal to end the U.S.-Iran war. Lebanon’s health ministry said three people were killed and 16 others wounded.

Iran warned a military response was coming. Trump reacted on social media: “We are very close to a Deal that will bring peace to the region, including to Lebanon” and “Let’s not blow it!”

Trump later told Fox News he still expected an agreement with Iran to be signed in the coming hours and planned to ask Tehran not to respond to Israel’s strikes.

The emerging deal is a disappointment to Israel’s government, which has been sidelined in negotiations led by Pakistan and others. The last time Israel struck Beirut’s suburbs a week ago, it set off the most serious escalation of fighting between Iran and Israel since the tenuous ceasefire took hold April 7.

Trump has pressed Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to stop hitting Lebanon hard while a deal is near, but the prime minister has defied him.

Trump told Fox News he had asked Netanyahu what he was doing, using an expletive.

U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres urged “maximum

Iran continues on A6

Cigarroas honored for their service to community

City of Laredo, mayor respond to criticism from council member

By Zach Davis
EDITOR

An awards gala honoring District VIII Council Member Alyssa Cigarroa and her father, Dr. Ricardo Cigarroa, turned political Thursday night when the former criticized Laredo Mayor Dr. Victor Trevino over a special City Council meeting scheduled during the same eve-

Criticism continues on A5

Imaginarium of South Texas recognizes honorees for leadership, impact during COVID-19



Dr. Ricardo Cigarroa, with Council Member Alyssa Cigarroa and ICU nurse Sandra Martinez, attends the gala.

By Zach Davis
EDITOR

The Imaginarium of South Texas honored Dr. Ricardo Cigarroa and District VIII Council Member Alyssa Cigarroa at its annual Imagine Awards Gala Thursday night at Paseo Real Reception Hall.

The event not only honored the two prominent local figures but also raised approximately \$18,845 for the nonprofit, organizers said.

Ricardo is one of 10 children

Cigarroas continues on A4

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