

BUZZ

August 2025



The **UNDERWOOD LAW FIRM** announced that **MATT MURRAY** has joined their legal team. Matt was born in Pampa, but spent the last nine years at the Fort Worth City Attorney's Office, working as their primary real estate attorney and specializing in complex acquisitions and dispositions. At Underwood, Matt will continue to focus on municipal law, using his strong public-sector background to serve clients across the region.

A large energy production and Artificial Intelligence facility was recently announced for the panhandle and will be built near the Pantex Plant next year. **FERMI AMERICA** announced a first-of-its-kind behind-the-meter HyperGrid™ campus that is expected to integrate the largest nuclear power complex in America, the nation's biggest combined-cycle natural gas project, utility grid power, solar power, and battery energy storage to deliver next-generation AI. In partnership with **TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY SYSTEM (TTU SYSTEM)**, this ambitious project is expected to be the world's largest energy-driven AI complex. Spanning 5,769 acres, the campus has the potential to deliver up to 11 gigawatts of power and 18 million square feet of AI capacity. Geotechnical work has already begun.



LAURA PRATT, a member attorney with the full-service law firm of **SPROUSE SHRADER SMITH PLLC**, in Lubbock, has been elected to the Board of Trustees of the **TEXAS BAR FOUNDATION**. She began her very diverse legal career at the City of Lubbock Attorney's Office, practicing municipal law and specializing in environmental compliance and natural resources law. She was also a municipal prosecutor. After two years overseas in the Middle East, Laura returned to Lubbock where she co-founded and served as Executive Director of OneVoiceHome, a local non-profit that supports survivors of sex trafficking. Before practicing law, she earned her J.D. from Texas Tech University School of Law with a Law and Science Certificate, and she earned B.A. in Biochemistry, with a minor in Business Management from the University of Arkansas.

HALL COUNTY has approved abatements for **LANCIUM CLEAN CAMPUS** construction on a mega-AI database center across an approximate 2,000 acre plot of land southeast of Turkey to begin 2026. Abilene has an AI facility as well, serving customers such as Oracle and Google.



JONATHAN AND CLAIRE GRAMMER have established the **RESEARCH FUND FOR CRITICAL MINERALS AND PRODUCED WATER** at Texas Tech

University. The fund seeks to advance research into chemical processes focused on developing domestic critical minerals and treatment of oilfield produced water for beneficial use. Texas Senate Bill 601 created the Texas Produced Water Consortium housed at Texas Tech University for the purpose of researching economically viable ways to improve revenue streams from the State's water supply. The Research Fund for Critical Minerals and Produced Water will help advance the oil and gas industry's efforts to revitalize legacy oil and gas wells in Texas by monetizing its produced water.

The **TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER (TTUHSC) GARRISON INSTITUTE ON AGING AND WOVENLY, INC.** are launching the **CENTERS FOR MEDICARE & MEDICAID SERVICES (CMS) GUIDE MODEL**, a new program designed to improve care for individuals living with dementia and support their caregivers. As one of the nation's early adopters of the GUIDE Model, the TTUHSC Garrison Institute on Aging is leading efforts to deliver coordinated, home-based virtual dementia care in collaboration with Wovenly. The program will expand access to vital services for Medicare beneficiaries across Lubbock, Amarillo and surrounding communities within a 30-mile radius. This program provides comprehensive care navigation and support services to patients and caregivers across the region, regardless of their location, delivering individualized care planning, caregiver education and proactive patient monitoring. This collaborative approach is designed to help patients remain safely in their homes while easing the burden on family caregivers. TTUHSC's interdisciplinary team will also provide comprehensive assessments both in-person and via telemedicine. Enrollment for eligible Medicare beneficiaries began July 1, with services available immediately in Lubbock and Amarillo. For more information about the program, contact the TTUHSC Garrison Institute on Aging at (806) 743-7821.



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER (TTUHSC) in Amarillo has received a \$50,000 grant from the **HARRINGTON CANCER AND HEALTH FOUNDATION (HCHF)** to support groundbreaking cancer research led by **HIRANMOY DAS, PH.D.**, a **TTUHSC JERRY H. HODGE SCHOOL OF PHARMACY** professor

of pharmaceutical sciences and director of the university's Vascular Biology And Stem Cell Research Laboratory. The funding will help advance the study of circulating tumor cells (CTCs), rare but powerful cancer cells that play a central role in the spread of cancer from one part of the body to another. By isolating and growing these cells in the lab, Das and his team hope to better understand how cancer metastasizes and develop targeted therapies to stop it. By focusing on CTCs, the project addresses one of the biggest challenges in cancer care: metastasis. According to the American Cancer Society, cancer metastasis remains the leading cause of cancer-related deaths in the United States. Current treatments often fail to stop or prevent this spread, making research into CTCs both timely and critical.



The AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY estimates that more than 313,780 cases of prostate cancer will be diagnosed in the United States in

2025, resulting in approximately 35,770 deaths. Bone metastasis — a stage of prostate cancer where the disease spreads to the bones — is the leading cause of prostate cancer-related death and currently remains incurable. "This stage of prostate cancer is devastating to the patient, as it often affects the bones of the spine, resulting in severe pain from fractures and spinal cord compression, along with significant neurological and functional disabilities," **SRINIVAS NANDANA, PH.D.**, said. "The current treatment for this advanced stage of the disease is limited to palliative care aimed at relieving symptoms, with no real hope of reducing or limiting the progression of the disease itself." With support from a three-year, \$1.85 million grant from the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) ("Role of TBX2 in the establishment of the Prostate Cancer Pre-Metastatic Niche (PMN) in the Bone"), Nandana and co-investigator **MANISHA TRIPATHI, PH.D.**, from the Department of Cell Biology and Biochemistry at the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center (TTUHSC) School of Medicine will investigate the role of TBX2, a transcription factor, in establishing the prostate cancer premetastatic niche in bone. Their research seeks to advance the understanding of prostate cancer metastasis and develop novel treatment strategies.



A WEST TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY professor has won a \$200,000 grant to further his research into clean energy. **DR. JUGANTA ROY**, assistant professor of chemistry in the Department of Chemistry and Physics in the Paul Engler College of

Agriculture and Natural Sciences, recently was awarded a **NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION RESEARCH GRANT** to develop efficient materials for solar cells

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through computer simulation and artificial intelligence. Roy said, "The successful development of the AI framework and subsequent fabrication of solar cells will benefit the sunny and agriculture-based Panhandle region through solar cells for agricultural lands." Roy works in computational chemistry, which uses calculations based on quantum and classical physics to understand and predict the behavior of molecules at the atomic level. In this case, Roy hopes to develop an AI-assisted framework to screen efficient materials for solar cells, called photochromic dyes or sensitizers, that change color in response to changes in light conditions. "The advantage of using these dyes is that it allows for greater control over the amount of light being absorbed and converted into electricity," Roy said. "This underlying principle is the basis for developing smart windows that adapt to changing light conditions, adjusting the balance between light transmittance and power generation."

With a vast landscape of land across the High Plains, it presents an opportunity for companies to develop renewable energy sources in the area. Wind turbines and Solar Projects have been seen across the area, with the largest single-phase solar project opening in Tulia. **HORNET SOLAR** began operations this year, comprising more than 1.36 million PV panels that can generate 600 MWAC of power. According to Vesper Energy developer of the Hornet Solar project, the project, when fully operational, will power 160,000 homes annually. **VESPER ENERGY** recently cut ribbon on Hornet Solar in Tulia, among the largest single-phase solar projects in the US. Another solar energy project in the works that will be brought to Carson and Potter counties is the **YELLOW ROSE SOLAR PROJECT**.

* Tom Moorhouse



Jeff Bilberry



The RANCHING HERITAGE ASSOCIATION will honor two working cowboys with this year's annual **RHA WORKING COWBOY AWARD**. The eastern division recipient is

TOM MOORHOUSE of Benjamin, Texas. The western division recipient is **JEFF BILBERRY** of Kenna, New Mexico. The Awards will be presented during the annual **NATIONAL GOLDEN SPUR AWARD HONORS** on Saturday, Oct. 4, at the Lubbock Memorial Civic Center in Lubbock. The award honors working cowboys skilled in all aspects of ranch work and respected by the ranch crew and ranching community. *AW*

* Photos by Ross Hecox