

# UTPB College of Business Graduate creates business to help human trafficking victims in West Texas

*Soraye Lara is the creator and owner of Unlimited Jewelry*

ODESSA, TX, UNITED STATES, October 5, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Sorayeanna Lara, better known as Soraye, is studying management in the College of Business at [UT Permian Basin](#).



Soraye Lara

Soraye said UT Permian Basin feels like home. After originally wanting to attend a bigger university, she's glad she landed at UTPB 2019 after transferring from Midland College.

“My family lives in Midland and at first I wanted to go to Tech just because it’s a big university and everyone goes there but, you know, the more I thought about it I was like I can get a really good education at UTPB. UT Permian Basin has a great business program and I’ll be closer to home so I can commute and save money. I can have time with my family but still get the college experience here on campus and attend events.”

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*Soraye Lara*

The quality of education that students receive at UT Permian Basin is no secret, and our programs have the

credentials to prove it. [UT Permian Basin's College of Business](#) is AACSB accredited.

An AACSB accreditation is known worldwide as the most recognized and specialized accreditation a business program can earn. The accreditation process includes a rigorous external review of a school's mission, faculty qualifications, curriculum, and ability to provide the highest-quality programs.

"It's amazing for a university to have those credentials, it's really impressive," explained Soraye. "I also had family friends recommend UTPB because they graduated from here and they loved it and they were also in the College of Business as well so I knew I was in good hands. Everyone here wants nothing but the best for you and they really set you up for success."

Some of that success for Soray includes getting involved in [Blackstone Launchpad](#). The Blackstone Launchpad helps students at UTPB succeed in entrepreneurship and their future careers. It's open to all students, regardless of their major.

Soray, who has dreams of her own to become an entrepreneur, was one of the first students to take advantage of the opportunities the Launchpad offers and, lucky for her, she already had a business idea in mind.

"I was working at an ethical and sustainable boutique in Midland and I was in charge of finding different brands that we would be proud to stand behind and while I was researching all of these different brands within fashion, a lot of them gave back to human trafficking. The more I looked into it, a lot of companies were employing survivors from overseas and third-world countries. Since I wasn't as familiar with human trafficking I wondered if this happened the United States. I learned that it is very prevalent here, especially in Texas. The Midland-Odessa area is the fourth largest hub of human trafficking so I was like this is something we need to talk about. So I decided to combine my love for fashion and business."

"It was super scary because I had no name for my business and hadn't put anything on paper it was just all in my head and I had to make a name, make a logo, a business plan, a prototype all within a week. I was able to get it done and I submitted my application," said Soraye. "I got an email saying I was a semi-finalist. I went through the competition, learned a lot on how to pitch my idea, and network with other students."

Soraye added the guidance and help from her professors she received along way is what helped her succeed.

"I would say I have received a lot of help through UTPB and the College of Business and the professors. I do have to say thanks to Dr. Ryan Peckham. He was my first professor here and he just really inspired entrepreneurship for me."

"When Soraye said she wanted to start a business I said great what is your idea? The reason and the why behind why you want to do it, is exactly the same reason on why you will be successful. Working on that project with her and seeing the growth it was taking was awesome. To have somebody who is so young and so dedicated to be able to overcome so many hurdles, it's just awesome to see," said Dr. Ryan Peckham, College of Business Professor at UTPB.

The Blackstone Launchpad home will soon be in UT Permian Basin's renovated library space. Currently the first floor of the library is being transformed into an innovation center complete

with a makerspace for students and even an e-sports stadium for gaming tournaments.

“We are excited about the renovations that are happening both at the CEED Building and the library. The Library is going to be a happening place,” said UT Permian Basin President, Dr. Sandra Woodley. “It’s going to be a place for the Blackstone LaunchPad and e-sports arena. A great place for students to hang out and learn and also use the makerspace to develop new ideas of their own to become entrepreneurs and work closely with faculty.

And that’s how her business: unlimited jewelry was born.

Soraye explained that when victims are able to escape, they typically lack the education and work experience necessary to make a fresh start. Using entrepreneurship to help solve this challenge, her goal is to create a jewelry and clothing retail business that employs survivors at every stage of the operation from manufacturing products to selling them.

Her involvement with the College of Business and the Launchpad gave her the opportunity to pitch her idea along with other UT System students who aspire to be entrepreneurs at a Launchpad competition.

“I graduate this August so I am super excited. It’s kind of sentimental to me because I recently lost my dad and the last thing I told him was that I am going to do my MBA so in honor of him I am going to pursue my MBA, so I am doing my MBA with an emphasis in finance and I am really excited.”

Alexa Dunson

University of Texas Permian Basin

[email us here](#)

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