

# FAILED EXPERIMENTS

## NOTES FROM THE LAB

VOLUME 1 SEPTEMBER 2024

THE NIK ROMANO HALLOWEEN ADVENTURE

Welcome!

As many of you know, it has been a very difficult year. After the events of last year, we decided to create a nonprofit organization for the sole purpose of continuing to raise funds for the Nik Romano Legacy Scholarship at UTSA. Our family has always been heavily involved in Halloween as our contribution to our community. We are continuing our Halloween Haunt as a way to honor our son and to provide much needed assistance to well-deserving students.

All of this has led to the creation of our first Newsletter, *Notes from the Lab*. The newsletter is designed to keep you up-to-date with all of the happenings at Failed Experiments: The Nik Romano Halloween Adventure.

In this issue, we are highlighting our first 4 scholarship winners. We will also be giving you a peek at our newest Halloween props and our newest goodies for donations. If you haven't signed up for the newsletter mailing list, please take a moment to do so at [www.thefailedexperiments.com](http://www.thefailedexperiments.com).

Thank you from all of us at Failed Experiments: The Nik Romano Halloween Adventure!

## INTRODUCING OUR 2024 SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS:

### **Matthew Wendtland**

Senior

Senior Construction Science & Management  
San Antonio, TX



I am writing to express how sincerely thankful I am to the donors of the Nikolas Romano Legacy Endowed Scholarship for this award.

I have been going to school part-time throughout my adulthood for almost ten years. I left home at a young age and had to get a full-time job to take care of myself. I have always dreamed of a career that I could build things and create; one that I would enjoy waking up to each morning. That was my motivation in going back to school in the evenings after work. I have been paying out of pocket for each semester to avoid going into debt. I am finally a senior with only three courses left to graduate. This scholarship is such a blessing and will provide me with great assistance in my last semester. It could not have come at a better time. I'll be starting an internship for Marksmen General Contractors, which I hope to be hired as a full-time employee following graduation. My internship will force me to leave my current job and take a pay cut so; this assistance is such a grace that I do not take lightly. You are helping me finish my goals of a degree and having a career in a field I'm passionate about.

I want to thank you again for this support. I humbly want to say that it is an absolute honor.

## **Ethan Hile**

Senior

Senior Construction Science & Management  
San Antonio, TX



To the donor of this scholarship,

I humbly thank you for giving me the opportunity to accept this generous scholarship. I am grateful for the support. Like other students, I have struggled to find a balance between work and school, but with this scholarship my anxiety will be relieved. It is a great honor to accept this scholarship and I vow to put it to good use. Sincerely, I thank you, my wife thanks you, and my entire household thanks you. I know that my senior year at UTSA will be my least stressful because money will no longer be a factor. This will allow me to graduate, get a job, and transition into the field. It's not just the money as to why I am grateful, it is also the fact that I am being recognized for academic excellence. I thank you all for being the first people to do that for me.

## **Ryan Trejo**

Junior

Construction Science & Management  
San Antonio, TX



I want to take some time aside and thank the donor of the Nikolas Andreas Romano Legacy Endowed scholarship. It means a great deal to me and I can't thank them enough. It makes my family proud and it brings me immense gratitude. I have put a lot of dedication and hard work into my future career since graduating from high school, and I feel like it is finally paying off. To be recognized and selected for this opportunity fills me with joy. I didn't think I was going to be awarded any scholarships while I was attending college, so this is a great honor. Throughout my college experience I have had to use loans to pay for my schooling. Receiving this scholarship takes a big burden off of my shoulders. The generosity from the donor is much appreciated and something special I will hold within me. Their kind and thoughtful gift brought me a smile when I found out I was selected. If I could see them in person, I would reassure them that their donation will not be in vain and I will make sure it doesn't go to waste. Finishing college will be a great accomplishment that nobody can take away. Thank you!

## **Gerry Garza**

Senior

Senior Construction Science & Management  
San Antonio, TX



I am writing to express my biggest thank you for selecting me to be a recipient of the Nikolas Andreas Romano Legacy Endowed Scholarship award. I am honored to receive this award and want to pay my respects to Nikolas Andreas Romano's family. I cannot imagine what it is like to lose your child, and I will keep you in my prayers to persevere through these hard times. I read a bit into the life of Nikolas and would like to say he seemed like a cool and genuine human being. I can tell if I had met him during my time at UTSA, I would have been friends with him. I would like to add that a few days before I got offered this scholarship, I had applied to Catamount Constructors and after reading his story online I had discovered that he worked there, I was mind blown. It could have been a coincidence but who knows. Again, I want to say a big thank you again for choosing me to be a recipient of this scholarship, it means a lot to me and will help relieve my family's financial stress. Without people like the donors of this scholarship the world would be a lot more stressful and overwhelming. I plan to reach a point in which I too can help someone in need and help the communities around me to make the world a better place.

## WE HAVE A LOGO!



The creation of a logo gives us an opportunity to give you a little history of our Haunt. We started the one here in Texas in 2011 as our contribution to our community. It has grown ever since. It is family friendly and has always been free to explore. The only change now is we ask for donations for the scholarship, but it is not a requirement to go through. We encourage people to go through time and again to see all that we have!

In the early years, we liked the idea of our haunt being created from a nuclear accident which spawned different “gangs”; evil Scientists, zombies, witches, clowns, etc. One of our early areas was the catacombs. We called these the failed experiments. Thus was born Failed Experiments, which now has become Failed Experiments, The Nik Romano Halloween Adventure. We wanted a logo that went back to the origins of our Haunt, that of a nuclear power plant gone awry. The “FAILED” stamp is reminiscent of stamps often seen on tests of all sorts. We think that the artist captured the essence of what our Haunt is about.

## DONATION GOODIES!

Last year, we had t-shirts as an incentive to donate. This year, we have added several exciting goodies! There will be an acid wash T-Shirt, a black Hoodie, a fancy water bottle, and a tote bag suitable for grocery shopping. Please come out and support us and take home a small token of our appreciation! There will be opportunities to take something home at the UTSA campus, Communication Arts High School campus, Northwest Vista campus, St. Philips College campus, and at the haunt on nights we are open.



T-Shirt and Hoodie Design



Water Bottles



Tote Bag Design

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

|                   |                                 |  |
|-------------------|---------------------------------|--|
| <b>October 14</b> | <b>UTSA Main Campus</b>         | We will be on campus a couple of days each week until Halloween. Come out and until the scholarship!   |
| <b>October 14</b> | <b>Communication Arts HS</b>    | We will be on campus, during lunch period, one day each week until Halloween. Come out and support the scholarship!  |
| <b>October 11</b> | <b>Failed Experiments Haunt</b> | Failed Experiments: The Nik Romano Halloween Adventure will be open from 6-10 PM on Friday and Saturday October 11/12, 18/19, 25/26. 9319 Trailing Fern, Helotes, TX |
| <b>October 26</b> | <b>Comm Arts HS Night</b>       | Failed Experiments: The Nik Romano Halloween Adventure welcomes Communication Arts HS October 26, 6-10 PM 9319 Trailing Fern, Helotes, TX                            |
| <b>HALLOWEEN</b>  | <b>Failed Experiments Haunt</b> | Failed Experiments: The Nik Romano Halloween Adventure Halloween Night! 5 -10 PM 9319 Trailing Fern, Helotes, TX   |

# SNEAK PREVIEW OF UPCOMING PROPS

For those of you that have been here before, you know we change things up a little every year. This year there are more changes than normal! We're not going to spill the secrets now; you will have to be surprised! But we will share a few modified props as well as new props to peak your interest! We look forward to seeing you at this years Haunt!



## DROP PANEL PROP

The drop panel prop will be in the witches hut and will surely add a jump scare! As you unsuspectingly pass the door, the prop will be triggered to activate the drop panel and reveal what is behind the panel. Most of the time there will be a video playing behind the panel; but on special occasions there will be live actors! This will surely get a good scare!

Check out the video of the prop on our blog page:

[www.thefailedexperiments.com/2024-prop-build-drop-panel/](http://www.thefailedexperiments.com/2024-prop-build-drop-panel/)



## POP UP WITCH

This is a prop that I have had for 5 or 6 years.

The original version broke so I had the opportunity to rebuild it—better.

This version has a lid on the top of the “tree stump” that slams shut adding a second scare portion.

I'm sure it will make more than a couple of people jump!

Check out the video of the prop on our blog page.

[www.thefailedexperiments.com/2024-prop-build-drop-panel-2/](http://www.thefailedexperiments.com/2024-prop-build-drop-panel-2/)



## ZOMBIE OVER THE FENCE

I have been thinking about this prop for a number of years.

Some background. Our haunt is in front of our house and our neighbor's house. Along the sidewalk we have a Halloween fence that separates the sidewalk from the haunt. Some of those involved with the haunt like to sit across the street and watch the activities and jump in to help when necessary.

A while ago, they noticed that there were a few people who refused to go in because it was too scary.

With that in mind, I had a vision of a zombie at the fence, standing quietly, controlled with a remote control switch. So those sitting across the street could see the people who didn't go in and scare them anyway.

This is that vision. As he stands there, he is making clicking noises waiting for his prey. When someone is detected, he turns his end, beds back and forth at the waist, then starts shaking the fence in excitement, and finally, just when you think he is done, he leans over the fence right over your head!

Check out the video of the prop on our blog page:

[www.thefailedexperiments.com/2024-prop-build/](http://www.thefailedexperiments.com/2024-prop-build/)