

# The Boston Globe

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## Democrats in Iowa feeling left out this time around

Trying to bounce back after 2020 debacle, demotion

By Lissandra Villa de Petrzelka  
GLOBE STAFF

CEDAR RAPIDS, Iowa — Libby Slappey, a Democratic political activist in Cedar Rapids, had a tough choice on Wednesday night: Would she watch Caitlin Clark play for the University of Iowa’s women’s basketball team, or the Republican primary presidential debate between Nikki Haley and Ron DeSantis? Rather than pick, she pulled both up on different computers.

“It’s not so much as a Democrat than as an Iowan that I feel the obligation to know what’s going on and to pay attention,” Slappey said over lunch at the Irish Democrat, a local institution. “We get to see the candidates up close and personal.”

Iowa has long played an outsized role in presidential elections, but Democrats dropped Iowa and New Hampshire down in the nominating process and elevated South Carolina. Iowa’s demotion came as little surprise after Democrats botched the caucuses in 2020 so badly that the results didn’t come out for days.

Meanwhile, Republicans kept Iowa in its critical early role, and so for the last year GOP candidates have made the traditional pilgrimages to its famous state fair and cattle call events, trotting across the 99 counties and encouraging people to please come out on a cold Monday night in January. It was bound to be a quieter year for Democrats anyway, given their incumbent president. But the result of the change is a one-sided campaign, giving the Democrats a lot of time to think about what their priorities should be, from winning elec-

IOWA, Page A7

## In N.H. poll, support for Israel, Biden’s actions

By Samantha J. Gross  
GLOBE STAFF

A strong plurality of New Hampshire voters sympathize with Israel over its war with Hamas, according to a new Suffolk University/Boston Globe/USA Today poll of the nation’s first primary state that also found strong support for President Biden’s handling of the conflict.

Nearly half of the 1,000 likely voters surveyed — 45 percent — said they believe Biden’s level of support for Israel is “about right,” concluding that overall they feel he is appropriately fulfilling his duties as the country’s chief diplomat.

Biden has “done what he has to do” in navigating the war in Gaza, said Elizabeth, a 68-year-old Republican from Amherst who declined to give her last name.

“Israel has been a longtime ally and we need to support them. On the other hand, I think Israel has done some pretty heavy-handed things,” she said. “We can’t be afraid to back away. I think his people are recognizing that.”

The poll findings indicate that at least in this swing state, many voters approve of the way Biden is navigating Israel’s ongoing bombardment and blockade of Gaza, which elsewhere has led to protests on campuses, massive demonstrations, and even his campaign staff penning an anonymous letter protesting his approach.

Among likely New Hampshire voters, more than 48 percent say they sympathize more with Is-

POLL, Page A7

## Mayo a milestone pick for Patriots

Former player is team’s first Black head coach; reportedly had been in line to take over in 2025

By Nicole Yang  
GLOBE STAFF

One day after parting with football legend Bill Belichick, the Patriots named Jerod Mayo as his successor Friday, making the linebackers coach and former player the first Black leader in team history.

The swift transition was facilitated by language in Mayo’s current contract that allowed the Patriots to bypass the National Football League’s rule that teams must have at least two external coaching candidates who are people of color and/or women.

New England was one of 13 NFL teams to never have had a Black non-interim head coach. The 37-year-old Mayo will be the 15th head coach in franchise history and the youngest active coach in the NFL.

The team plans to hold an introductory news conference with Mayo at noon Wednesday.

“Head coach Jerod Mayo!!! Love the sound of that!! Congratulations big bro,” former Patriots linebacker Dont’a Hightower wrote on Instagram.

The Patriots have been eyeing Mayo as Belichick’s successor since January 2022, when they released a statement saying the team had begun negotiating a contract extension that would keep him in New England “long term.”

At the time, according to a league source, the plan was for Mayo to become head coach in 2025. However, New England’s dreadful 2023 season, which ended with a 4-13 record, expedited the timeline.

When the Patriots decided to part

MAYO, Page C4



BARRY CHIN/GLOBE STAFF

Jerod Mayo, 37, who had been the Patriots linebackers coach, will be the youngest head coach in the league.

### ‘I feel like I’m ready’

He’s been here for years, but here are five things to know about the new coach. **C1.**

### A different side

Leaders of other Boston sports teams knew a Belichick fans wouldn’t recognize. **C1.**

## A BIG HEADS-UP



PHOTOS BY DAVID L. RYAN/GLOBE STAFF



(Top) “Endgame,” by Max Streicher, is catching eyes near Downtown Crossing, part of the Downtown Boston Business Improvement District’s Winteractive installation. Also featured are (above) “Echoes — A Voice from Uncharted Waters,” by Mathias Gmachl, and (left) “Myth and Evidence,” by Mathieu Valade. **B2.**

## Ignoring COVID still comes with price, some doctors say

By Adam Piore  
GLOBE STAFF

The number of COVID-19 infections and hospitalizations is surging across the region. But not fast enough to overcome widespread COVID fatigue, a phenomenon some frustrated public health experts say feeds a deadly state of denialism.

Levels of coronavirus in Boston-area waste water recently reached their highest point since the Omicron surge two years ago. Yet pandemic-era precautions like masking and testing before parties and flights — even when you have a cold — have gone the way of toilet paper hoarding and Zoom birthday parties. And just one in five Massachusetts residents say they have received the latest booster, which protects against the new, highly contagious JN.1 variant causing the surge.

What are the potential consequences? The answers vary depending on which public health expert you ask.

COVID, Page A10

‘Why can’t [discovery] be a lot quicker anyway so we can cure more diseases?’

STEVE PAGLIUCA, formerly of Bain Capital and current Celtics co-owner

## Billionaires join top scientists on institute with a new model

By Robert Weisman and Jonathan Saltzman  
GLOBE STAFF

A team of high-powered scientists and billionaire investors said Friday that they’re launching a biomedical institute in Cambridge’s Kendall Square with \$500 million in private funding with the aim of shortening the path from research breakthroughs to life-saving medicines.

The institute, called Arena BioWorks, will put drug discovery and company creation under one roof, upending the traditional model where academic research and venture-backed drug development are separate.

Backed by deep-pocketed investors including Steve Pagliuca, the former co-chair of Bain Capital and Celtics co-owner, and high-tech mogul Michael Dell, Arena has already lured top scientists from academic labs with lucrative compensation packages, but so far has publicly named only a few.

But already Arena’s hiring spree has raised some concerns of a brain drain at universities, leaving them to struggle to compete for the top researchers and train new generations of scientists.

Arena has been in the planning stages for more than two years. For the past six months, it has operated in stealth

INSTITUTE, Page A10



### Hood riddance

**Saturday:** Rain ends early. High 55-60. Low 30-35.

**Sunday:** Seasonable. High 39-44. Low 22-27.

High tide: 12:07 a.m., 12:17 p.m.

Sunrise: 7:12 Sunset: 4:34

**Weather and Comics, D4-5. Obituaries, C9.**

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\$3.50



**The planet experienced its hottest year on record in 2023**, so much warmer than past years that it shocked climate scientists. **B1.**

**Grubhub has agreed to pay \$3.5 million to settle a lawsuit accusing it of overcharging** struggling restaurants for meal delivery during the pandemic. **D1.**

**The Federal Aviation Administration will increase oversight of Boeing** after a panel blew off an Alaska Airlines plane in midflight. **A2.**

**Starting in February, the Education Department will begin forgiving the debts of some student loan borrowers**, nearly six months ahead of its deadline. **A2.**

**Houthi leaders and their allies vowed to respond** to US-led military strikes. **A4.**